



MCPB

Note: Mike Riley is on leave the week of 7/19, so Miti F. will sign as his acting.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 22, 2021

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *mf*
Miti Figueredo, Deputy Director, Administration *mf*

Andrew Frank, Division Chief, Park Development Division (PDD)

CFC

FROM: Ching-Fang Chen, Landscape Architect, PDD, 301-495-2557
Patricia McManus, Design Section Manager, PDD *PM*

SUBJECT: Facility Plan for the Renovation of Columbia Local Park

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE the Recommended Facility Plan, including the cost estimate.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this project is to develop a facility plan to renovate the northern portion of Columbia Local Park located at 14900 Old Columbia Pike in Burtonsville, Maryland. A companion Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan No. MR2021028, Upper Branch Special Protection Area and Mandatory Referral No. MR2021028 for Columbia Local Park will be presented to the Planning Board for approval.

The objective is to promote active recreation, expand park uses, renew existing infrastructure, and improve site access and safety by introducing new program elements and activating previously underutilized program areas. Additionally, this effort will provide facilities for three underserved user

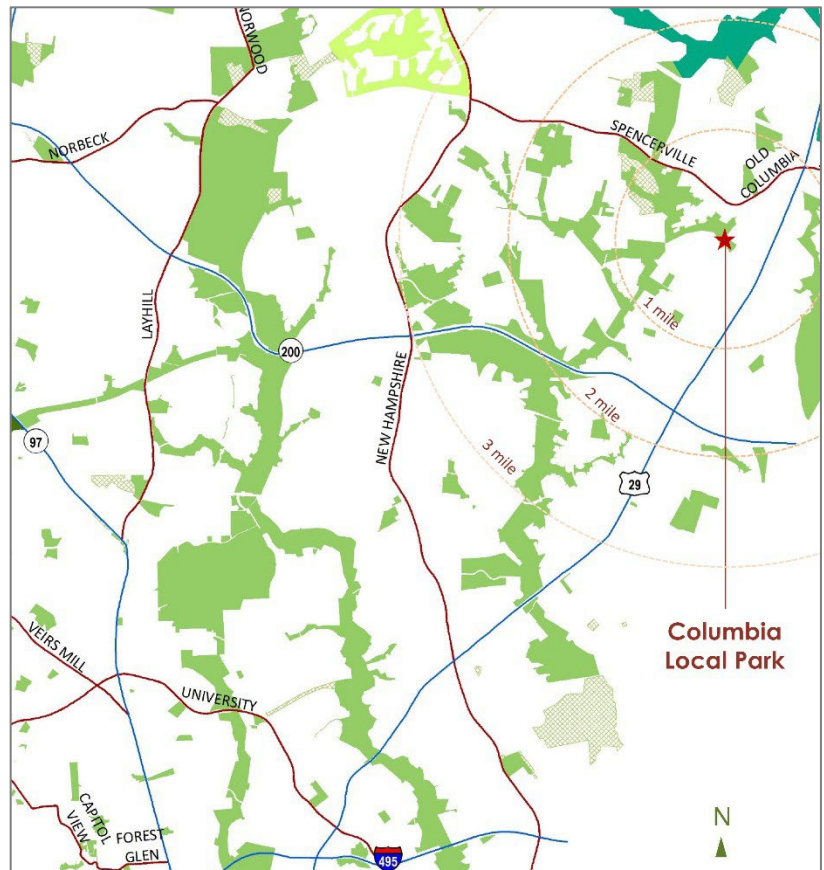


Figure 1: Vicinity Map

groups, as documented in the 2017 *Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan*: futsal/court soccer players, pickleball players and dog owners. These improvements will be implemented without increasing the site's total impervious area, while providing environmental enhancement as feasible.

Introduction

Columbia Local Park comprises approximately 25.2 acres within the Fairland Planning Area just south of the Burtonsville commercial core. Located west of Route 29 and Old Columbia Pike, the park is within the eastern boundary of the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area. The park was developed in 1974 and is located immediately adjacent to the Marilyn J. Praisner Community Recreation Center and the Marilyn J. Praisner Library.



Figure 2: 2019 Aerial Map

The park is bisected by a forested stream valley with a 0.52-acre stormwater management pond east of the access road. The forest effectively splits the park into two distinct spaces. The basketball courts, softball/baseball fields and play area on the southern portion of the park near Old Columbia Pike are highly visible and heavily used. By contrast, the northern portion of the park is more isolated and obscured from view by a tributary to Paint Branch and the dense forest cover that surrounds it. All the facilities in this area are underutilized, and three tennis courts have been taken out of service, leaving a

large, unprogrammed, paved and fenced space in the northern portion of the park. Currently, the trail between the courts is disconnected from the residential neighborhood trail to the north.

Project Funding and Timing

The facility planning study was funded with \$106,000 from the Department of Parks Capital Improvements Program in the Facility Planning Local Parks PDF. Facility planning represents thirty percent complete construction documents, including a proposed design, cost estimate and determination of regulatory feasibility. Preliminary concept alternatives were developed by internal staff after meeting with the community. Whitney Bailey Cox & Magnani, LLC (WBCM) was hired in November 2018 to perform engineering services. If approved, this Park Refresher project will be proposed for final design beginning in FY22 with construction anticipated to begin in FY23.

Facility Planning Process

The facility planning process included the following sequence of work:

1. Review and analyze existing site conditions.
2. Prepare and obtain approval of Forest Conservation Exemption.
3. Meet with the community to gather input and ideas for the park.
4. Identify program of requirements and priorities.
5. Develop concept alternatives.
6. Obtain community input and comments through the Open Town Hall Forum on the Montgomery Parks website.
7. Develop recommended alternative based on input received.
8. Perform geotechnical investigations.
9. Prepare and submit Combined Preliminary and Final Water Quality Plan/Site Development Stormwater Management Plan and obtain approval from the Department of Permitting Services.
10. Coordinate recommended plan with the community and stakeholders through the Open Town Hall Forum and resolve any outstanding issues with stakeholder groups and regulatory agencies.
11. Finalize plan based on input received.
12. Submit site impervious analysis and Water Quality Plan to Montgomery County Planning Department for Mandatory Referral.
13. Prepare facility plan staff report, cost estimate and operating budget estimates.
14. Present facility plan recommendations and costs to the Montgomery County Planning Board for approval along with companion Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan and Mandatory Referral.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

1997 Fairland Master Plan

The [1997 Fairland Master Plan](#) envisions “a livable suburban community-a series of neighborhoods with sidewalks and street trees, access to the natural environment and recreational facilities with employment and commercial areas emphasizing horizontal rather than vertical structures” (Page 15).

The [Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan](#) (FBCMP), which is currently in progress, is an update to a portion of the 1997 Fairland Master Plan. The plan recognizes the challenges for access to park and open spaces in Fairland due to transecting highways, disconnected and curvilinear street patterns, and meandering stream valleys creating obstacles, particularly to walking or biking. As outlined in the scope of work, the plan will identify specific recreational needs, anticipate trends, and promote important goals such as health and social equity for the community. Though just beyond the FBCMP's boundary, renovations to Columbia Local Park will support the FBCMP's vision and provide recreational services for the Fairland community.

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation in Montgomery County, Maryland, Approved and Adopted June 2011

Vision 2030 is a strategic plan for park and recreation services in Montgomery County. Columbia Local Park is within the East Transit Corridor sub-area. The plan recommends adding or increasing functionality of existing facilities, and specifically:

- *Enhance, expand, or add programs and services identified as high priorities by research and customer feedback.* (Objective 1.1, page 18)
- *Provide a variety of parks and recreation facilities that address current needs and emerging trends (e.g., dog parks, community gardens, cricket, ice facilities, tennis facilities, etc.).* (Objective 5.3, page 27)

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

Building on the findings of the Vision 2030 Plan, the [2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space \(PROS\) Plan](#) provides strategies and priorities for delivering the right kinds of services and facilities in the most effective locations. The Plan estimates future facility needs and recommends service delivery strategies in Chapter 4:

- *Determine where there are underutilized sports courts for potential conversion to skate parks, dog parks, or futsal courts. Consider existing tennis court utilization within a larger area to preserve an adequate supply of tennis courts.*
- *Select a pilot site for pickleball courts by converting one tennis court to two pickleball courts.*
- *Continue to seek sites for dog parks, skate parks, and futsal courts on underutilized tennis courts.*

In Chapter 4 and in Appendix 5, the PROS Plan specifically identifies Columbia Local Park as a development priority in the Eastern County to create four pickleball courts.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Site History

In 1969, the M-NCPPC purchased 32 acres of undeveloped land in Burtonsville, an area that was still primarily forest and farmland, but where single family residential development was beginning to occur. In 1971, Montgomery County Public Schools recognized a growing need for a new school in this part of the county, and the M-NCPPC carved out ten acres of the original 32 for what was intended to become

Carson Elementary School. Although the school was never built, Columbia Local Park was developed in 1974, in very much the same configuration that exists today.

As more residential development came into the Burtonsville area, Montgomery County recognized the need for additional public services and selected the former Carson Elementary School site as the location for a new recreation center and library. In 2002, the Marilyn J. Praisner Community Recreation Center and the Marilyn J. Praisner Library opened to the public. Around the same time, the Briarcliff Manor residential community to the north of Columbia Local Park was being constructed, which dedicated the property around their stormwater management ponds to the M-NCPPC as a Planning Board condition of the development to ensure proper long-term maintenance within this environmentally sensitive area of the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area.

Site Context

The park is surrounded by residential neighborhoods and is a hub for recreational, social, and cultural activity for the residents of Burtonsville. The softball/baseball fields at Columbia Local Park are considered the Burtonsville Athletic Association's home fields for both spring and fall youth baseball leagues, and the annual Burtonsville Day Festival is held at Columbia Local Park.

The park is located just outside the identified Equity Focus Areas, Energized Public Spaces deficit areas and Park Priority Areas, but the new facilities will help to serve park needs in these areas.

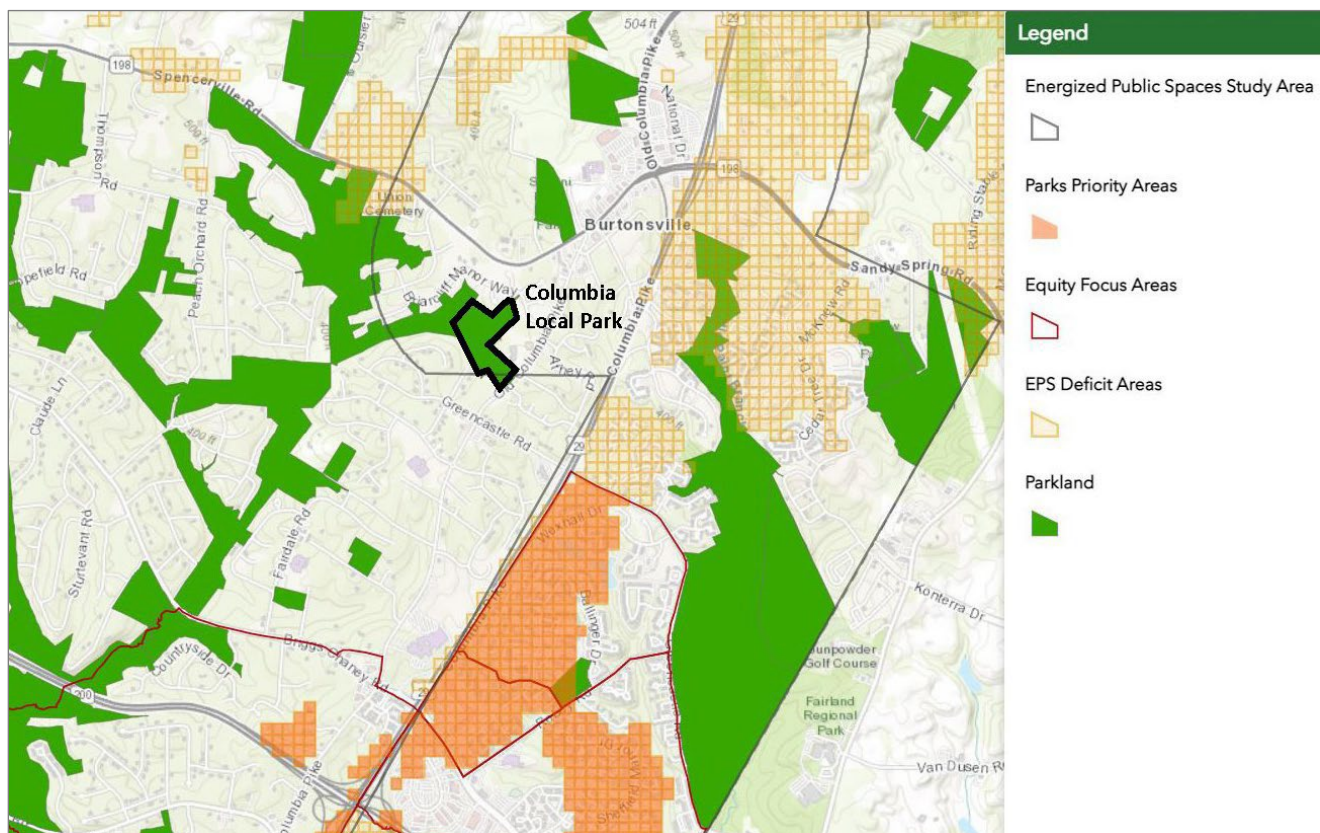


Figure 3: Equity Focus and Park Priority Areas



Figure 4: Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area

Situated at the eastern edge of the Upper Paint Branch watershed, Columbia Local Park is part of the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area. Special Protection Area law was established in 1994 to protect, maintain and restore the fragile watershed areas of Montgomery County in order to help restore water quality of the Anacostia River, Potomac River, Patuxent River and the Chesapeake Bay. The Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area was designated to protect the unique, nationally recognized cold-water fishery within the Upper Paint Branch stream system. The Upper Paint Branch is the only suburban stream system in Montgomery County with a long-term, self-sustaining brown trout population.

Impervious surface restrictions for development projects in the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area are set forth in the Upper Paint Branch Environmental Overlay Zone, which restricts development to an eight percent imperviousness limit for new projects. The Overlay also contains a provision for projects with impervious surfaces lawfully existing before July 1, 2007 that exceed the eight percent limit and are proposing to construct new features within the project area. Columbia Local Park was constructed in 1974, and on July 1, 2007, had an impervious surface coverage of 10.52 percent. As such, any modifications to Columbia Local Park cannot increase the overall impervious coverage of the property beyond 10.52 percent without Planning Board approval.

Existing Conditions



Figure 5: Birds Eye View

Columbia Local Park is bisected by a forested stream valley, effectively dividing the park into two distinct spaces, each with its own unique character and use. The southern portion of the park faces Old Columbia Pike, allowing ample visual and physical access into this portion of the park. The park entry drive, across from Oakhurst Drive, forms a central spine for the site, providing vehicular access to the recreation center and library parking lots, access to the parking lot for the fields and basketball court and access to the northern portion of the park. The north-south orientation of the two softball/baseball fields in the southern portion of the site optimizes sun angles, making them the most popular locations for games. The southern portion of the site also contains three basketball courts and a multi-user swing. The park entrance drive extends through the forested stream valley and into the northern portion of the park. Surrounded by dense vegetation, the northern portion of the park is comparatively remote and underutilized. The two softball fields here are oriented east-west, putting the sun in players' eyes at all times. Additional amenities in the northern portion of the park include a picnic shelter and two tennis courts. The park once contained three additional tennis courts, which have since been abandoned with an intent to ultimately remove or repurpose them. All that remains is a large paved space, closed off by chain-link fence. Two hard surface trails provide pedestrian access into the park from the Briarcliff Manor neighborhood, however, the eastern trail is disconnected from the park amenities. The northern portion of the park also contains the stormwater management pond for the Briarcliff Manor residential community, which is maintained by Montgomery Parks.

The extents of this facility plan are limited to the northern portion of Columbia Local Park, with primary focus on the impervious surface of the five current and former tennis courts there. The limits of work

expands beyond these court areas to rehabilitate parking areas, repair the athletic field, restore existing pedestrian connections to provide accessibility to existing facilities, and to enhance stormwater treatment of runoff coming from these impervious surfaces.

A portion of the project limits of work is located within Montgomery County's High Potential Prehistoric Zone. A review of archaeological site data on file with the Maryland Historical Trust indicates that a late 19th century stone spring house foundation can be found in the forested area immediately south of the project limits of disturbance. A review by archaeological staff indicates that the limits of work have a low potential to contain archaeological resources, due to previous land disturbance from the construction of the parking lot, tennis courts and shade structure.

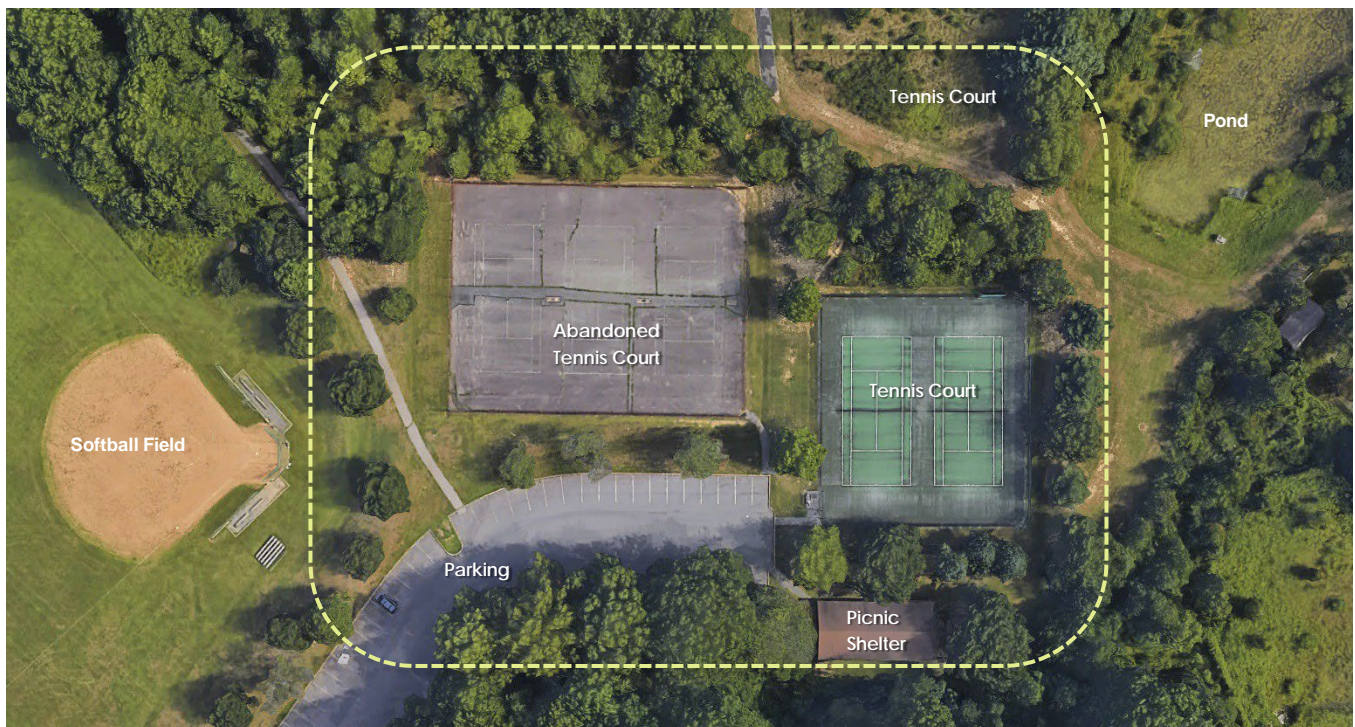


Figure 6: Aerial Map - Study Area

SITE UTILIZATION

Camera Data

In May 2017, park staff mounted a camera in the tennis courts at Columbia Local Park. For nearly three weeks, this camera took a still photograph every 15 minutes between 6:00 AM and 11:00 PM, capturing images of the two current tennis courts, three abandoned tennis courts and surrounding hard surface trail connectors and green spaces. The camera captured a total of 119 individuals using this portion of the park, which averages to fewer than six users per day during the study period. Data from the Park Permit Office shows the softball fields in the southern portion of the park were used for games or

practices six days a week during the same time period, suggesting the southern portion of the park would see a minimum of 36 users per day (nine players per baseball team, two teams per field, two fields).

The users in the northern portion of Columbia Local Park engaged in a wide range of activities on the courts and the area surrounding them. Tennis was the predominant activity in the northern portion of the park, accounting for 31% of the total activity during the survey period. Only twice during the survey period were both tennis courts being used for tennis at the same time. Although tennis playing occurred more than any other single activity in the northern portion of the park, several activities occurred with regularity:

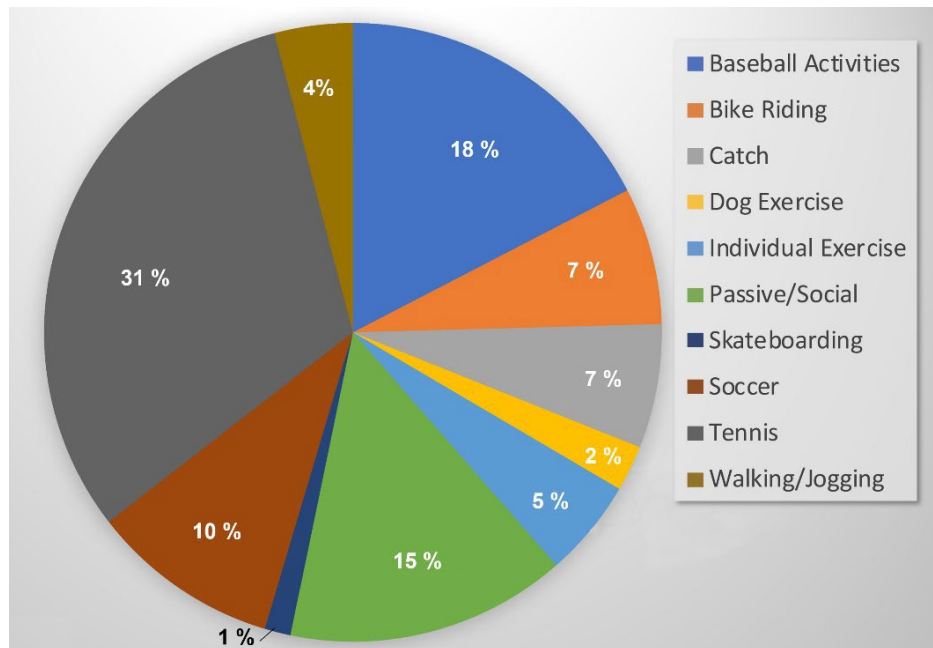


Figure 7: Proportion of park use by activity based on camera data, May 4-24, 2017

- Baseball practice, warm-ups or lessons, including batting practice (17%)
- Passive/social activity, including picnicking, reading, or having a conversation (15%)
- Soccer or futsal (10%)

Several other activities occurred occasionally throughout the study period, including bike riding, skateboarding, calisthenics, walking, dog exercise and skateboarding.

During the study period, most park use occurred during weekday afternoons and evenings, with the park remaining relatively quiet on the weekends. It appears most users came to play tennis after work or after school on weekdays. Baseball activities tended to occur on weekend mornings, before scheduled games or for practicing when the fields were too wet to use. Individual exercisers, joggers and dog



Figure 8: Sample image from camera reconnaissance, May 4-24, 2017

walkers tended to appear sporadically throughout the day, with spikes in use occurring before work, during lunchtime hours and in the evenings. In general, park use patterns suggest that there is little overlap of activities or conflicting activities occurring in close proximity to one another.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Anecdotal evidence from Park Police and other park staff indicate a significant amount of suspicious or inappropriate behavior occurs in the northern half of Columbia Local Park. Witnessing this behavior can be intimidating, discouraging others from using the park for its intended activity and driving down the overall number of park users. Three key factors likely contribute to the unwanted behavior and underutilization of the northern part of Columbia Local Park:

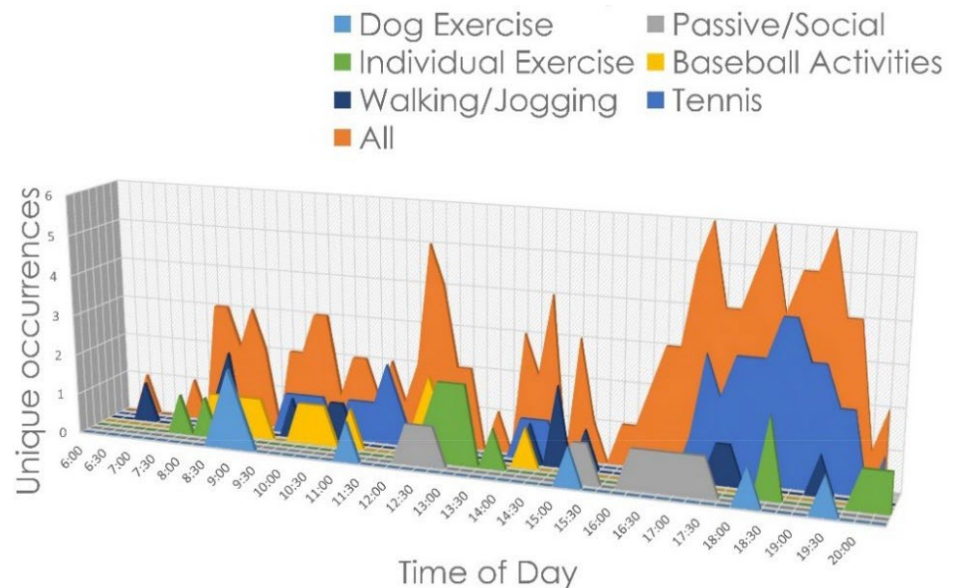


Figure 9: Park activities by time of day, May 4th ~ 24th, 2017



Figure 10: Site Photo looking north from the park's entry road. The northern part of the park lies beyond the forested stream valley buffer.

- A general lack of amenities in the area. The east-west orientation of the baseball fields makes them less attractive compared to the north-south fields in the southern portion of the park. The picnic shelter is not a permitted amenity, so only users who already know of its existence would go back to use it. Only two of the five existing tennis courts are usable.
- A lack of visibility and unfamiliarity with the northern area. The southern area of the park is highly visible from Old Columbia Pike and the Praisner Community Recreation Center. Many visitors may not realize there are amenities in the northern portion of the park. The two paths connecting the neighborhoods to the park from the north appear well used, but one ends at the top of a steep slope rather than connecting to the amenities.
- A perceived lack of safety. This portion of the park is not visible from the main road and Park Police must drive all the way into the space to monitor activity. Visitors not familiar with the area may be hesitant to venture to the northern part of the park because they are uncertain as to the area's safety and security.

Recent experience shows that underutilized parks can be activated by introducing amenities that encourage large groups of users to congregate. A dog park is one example of such an amenity. In 2016, the Ellsworth Urban Dog Park opened near downtown Silver Spring. The site selected for the dog park was an underused seating area within Ellsworth Urban Park, adjacent to Colesville Road. Traffic noise and obscured views into the area resulted in park maintenance staff reported regularly encountering empty liquor bottles, used needles, and people sleeping on park benches. As soon as the dog park opened, the area immediately became a social hub for the community, visited at all hours by dogs and their owners. In addition to serving as a catalyst for activating underutilized spaces, the 2017 PROS Plan suggests that there is an unmet need for dog parks throughout Montgomery County.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public Meeting

On April 24, 2018, more than 60 county residents attended a community meeting at the Marilyn J. Praisner Community Recreation Center. In addition to residents who live within walking distance of the park, several tennis, pickleball and futsal enthusiasts from all over Montgomery County attended the meeting. Staff presented a brief history of the park, summarized existing conditions and site utilization data collected to date, described the limits of the project, and presented a series of possible site improvement diagrams. Following the presentation, attendees were encouraged to comment on the diagrams and propose additional program elements to be considered. While individual participants advocated for a variety of activities, the general consensus was to include as many program elements as possible, allowing recreation opportunities for all interests and abilities. Meeting notes are included in Attachment A.

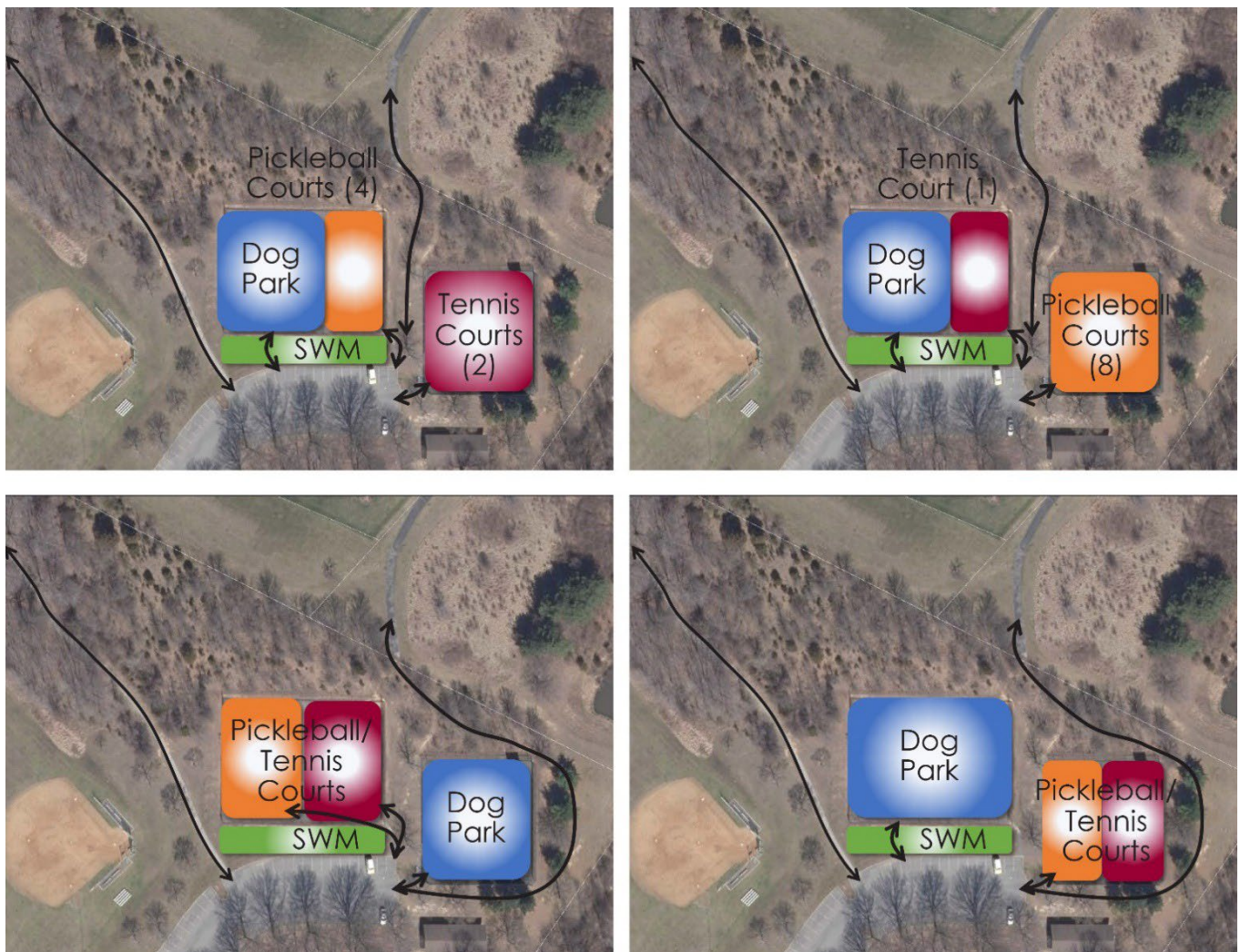


Figure 11: Site improvement alternative diagrams presented at the April 24, 2018 community meeting

The 2017 PROS Plan defines Local Parks as providing "both programmed and informal recreation opportunities within reach of all area residents." Several meeting attendees pointed out the large number of participants who live well outside the Fairland Planning Area and expressed concern that the voices of area residents would be drowned out in the planning process. Parks staff assured the audience that, while all comments would be taken into account, the opinions of residents within the Fairland Planning Area would be given consideration throughout the process.

2018 Open Town Hall Forum

Using feedback gathered from the public meeting and subsequent correspondence from community members, staff refined the site improvement alternative diagrams into more detailed concept plans. Court soccer was incorporated into the alternatives as the result of advocacy from several community members. Neighbors to the north of the park requested additional access into the park, so improvements to the existing trail connections were considered. Requests for improvements beyond the scope of the project (such as court lighting and ballfield renovations) were noted and may be considered with future projects. Community correspondence is included in Attachment B.

In June 2018, three concept alternative plans were posted to the [Open Town Hall Forum](#) on the Montgomery Parks website and public notice went out, encouraging community members to visit the site and vote on their preferred plan. Visitors could view the three plans, vote on their favorite (or express no preference) and provide additional comments.



Figure 12: Concept Option 1



Figure 13: Concept Option 2



Figure 14: Concept Option 3

Option 1 leaves the tennis courts in their current location. Striping for two pickleball courts and a soccer court would be overlain on the tennis courts and soccer goals would be built into the tennis court fence. Four new pickleball courts would be built on approximately one-third of the currently unprogrammed paved area. The remainder of the paved area would become a dog park, separated from the pickleball courts by a solid wall. New drinking fountains would be included in the dog park and between the two court areas. Benches would be added to the dog park and adjacent to the pickleball courts. A shade structure in the dog park would cover portions of the large dog area and small dog area. A new, accessible trail would come from the neighborhood to the north, wrap around the tennis court and connect to the parking lot.

Option 2 proposes to convert the two existing tennis courts into a dog park with small dog area, large dog area, benches, shade structure and drinking fountains. The open paved area would be converted into six pickleball courts and one tennis court with a junior tennis overlay. Benches would separate the tennis court from the pickleball courts, and a new drinking fountain would go just outside the court area, connecting the park with the neighborhood to the north.

Option 3 also proposes to replace the two existing tennis courts with a dog park. A soccer court, four pickleball courts and a tennis court would occupy the open paved area. The tennis court would be overlain with two pickleball courts to create a total of six pickleball courts. A new shade structure, benches and drinking fountain would go next to the soccer court and pickleball courts. A new path and stairs would connect the park with the neighborhood to the north.

When voting closed on July 17, 2018, 642 individuals had visited the Open Town Hall forum for Columbia Local Park and 423 individuals cast votes for their preferred option. Of the 423 votes cast, Option 1 received 56 votes, Option 2 received 108 votes, Option 3 received 246 votes and 13 voters expressed no preference. Of the registered votes cast by residents living within the Fairland Planning Area, the majority preferred Option 3. The strong support for Option 3, both within the Fairland Planning Area and countywide, provided staff clear direction to move forward with that option as the Recommended Plan. Comments from the 2018 Open Town Hall Forum are included in Attachment C.

Along with the strong support for Option 3, several comments submitted to the Open Town Hall Forum included suggestions for improving the plan. While many suggestions were easily incorporated, such as retaining a tennis court with no pickleball overlay, conflicting or infeasible comments required professional judgement by Parks staff in deciding whether to make substantive changes to the plan. Additionally, minor refinements were made to the plan to ensure the project did not add to the park's impervious surface coverage and to meet stormwater management criteria.

2021 Open Town Hall Forum

Due to unanticipated delays in the project schedule, the Recommended Plan was posted to the [Open Town Hall Forum](#) on the Montgomery Parks website for a final public comment period from December 30, 2020 to March 31, 2021. Public notice went out, encouraging community members and all who had attended prior meetings to visit the project site and vote on their preferred plan. This topic had

194 visitors and received 99 responses. Of the responses received, 78% supported the recommended plan. There was especially strong interest for pickleball courts and a dog park. Many suggested replacing the tennis court with a pickleball court or adding a pickleball overlay to the tennis court. Concerns for the dog park (noise, waste and location) and preferences for different program elements such as playground and a turf field were the main reasons from those who voted against the plan. Comments from the 2021 Open Town Hall Forum are included in Attachment G.

Agency Coordination and Regulatory Approvals

The following is a summary of agency coordination performed for this project:

M-NCPPC Department of Parks

Staff coordinated with various stakeholders within Montgomery Parks throughout the planning process as a part of the Planning, Design, Construction and Operations (PDCO) team process. This included staff from Park Police, Park Planning and Stewardship, Facilities Management, Northern Region, Urban Forestry, ADA Program, Environmental Engineering, Natural Resources and Trail Planning.

M-NCPPC Department of Planning

The improvements proposed at Columbia Local Park will not require the removal of any forest. Therefore, it qualifies for a Forest Conservation Plan exemption under Section 22A-5(t) of the Forest Conservation Law. A *Forest Conservation Exemption/Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD)* was approved on August 29, 2018 (File #42019022E) for the renovation of the park. The exemption was recertified on April 29, 2021. While no forest or specimen trees are being removed, several additional trees will be planted to provide additional shade for the dog park and to contribute to the stormwater uptake in the bioretention areas. A companion Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan (MR2021028) for Columbia Local Park, due to its location within Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area (SPA), will be reviewed by the Planning Board prior to review of the park facility plan. Refer to Attachment D for the Forest Conservation Plan Exemption.

Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

Staff met with representatives from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) on September 6, 2018, to discuss the proposed stormwater management plan for the project and to understand DPS expectations for stormwater design for the project. Because the site is within the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area, the project is required to submit a water quality plan for approval by the Planning Board. DPS was generally supportive of the project and its associated stormwater management practices, indicating that only improved-upon impervious surfaces within the project limits would need to be treated for water quality. Additionally, DPS will likely require reinforced sediment control practices to keep construction runoff and sediment out of waterways.

The Combined Preliminary and Final Water Quality Plan/Site Development Stormwater Management Plan for the park was approved on October 25, 2019 (File #284605). The Plan will achieve the required water quality goals by maintaining the existing level of impervious surface and installing stormwater treatment facilities to provide environmental site design to the maximum extent practicable on the development. The plan meets the requirements of the [Upper Paint Branch Special Protection](#)

[Area](#). Refer to Attachments H, I, and J for the approved plans and water quality report.

RECOMMENDED FACILITY PLAN

The recommended facility plan converts the two existing tennis courts into a dog park. The dog park consists of an 8,200-square-foot large dog area and a 2,700-square-foot small dog area, both accessed via a central, double-gated vestibule that allows owners to safely leash and unleash their dogs before entering or exiting the park. Each enclosure is concrete paved and contains a pet turf play mound. Several benches line the perimeter of the dog park and each dog area has its own drinking fountain and trash receptacles. A shade structure spans the two enclosures, and additional trees will be planted around the exterior of the dog park, providing shade on hot days. A five-foot-tall chain link fence surrounds the dog park and each enclosure contains a double-leafed gate to allow maintenance access.



Figure 15: Recommended Facility Plan

The large, abandoned paved area will be converted into one tennis court, four pickleball courts, a soccer court, and a small gathering area with shade structure. The tennis court and soccer court will each be surrounded by a ten-foot-tall chain link fence. Each court will have direct access for players as well as a double-leafed maintenance gate to facilitate leaf removal and other maintenance activities.

The pickleball courts will be separated by three-foot-tall fences and contain openings at the corners to allow players access to the courts from the east and the west. Based on the strong advocacy for pickleball expressed in the 2021 Open Town Hall Forum comments, the pickleball overlay on the tennis court was added back to the plan and will provide two additional pickleball courts when tennis isn't being played.

The paved area just south of the soccer court and west of the pickleball courts will contain a drinking fountain, benches, picnic tables and a shade structure. This area provides a space for players to congregate while waiting for a court to free up or to socialize after a match. The plan recommends painting the existing large shelter south of the proposed dog park and adding additional picnic tables to renew the facility.

Proposed improvements also include enhanced pedestrian access to this portion of Columbia Local Park. Within the parking lot, two existing parking spaces will be converted into ADA-compliant accessible parking spaces, and the parking lot will be renovated. To connect the park to the neighborhood to the north, a set of stairs or ramp will be built into the steep slope just north of the proposed dog park, connecting the existing path that terminates there to the parking lot. The existing pathway between the old tennis courts and baseball field will be renovated to provide accessibility into and between the new amenities.



Figure 16: Site Photo - open space between the current tennis courts and abandoned court area, with a steep slope leading up to the adjacent community beyond. A new set of stairs is proposed to replace the worn path just beyond the corner of the tennis court fence and connect to the hard surface trail that currently terminates at the top of the slope.

Impervious Surface Calculations

The recommended plan will result in a net reduction of nearly 2,000 square feet of impervious surface, bringing the site's impervious coverage from 10.52 percent to 10.34 percent. The recommended plan reduces the existing tennis court area by 1,882 square feet for the dog park and bioretention facility; and expands the existing abandoned paved area 10 feet westward adding 1,696 square feet to accommodate the court soccer, pickleball and tennis uses.

Although the improved and expanded pathways will enhance the park's pedestrian circulation, the additional impervious surface created will need to be offset by impervious surface removal elsewhere,

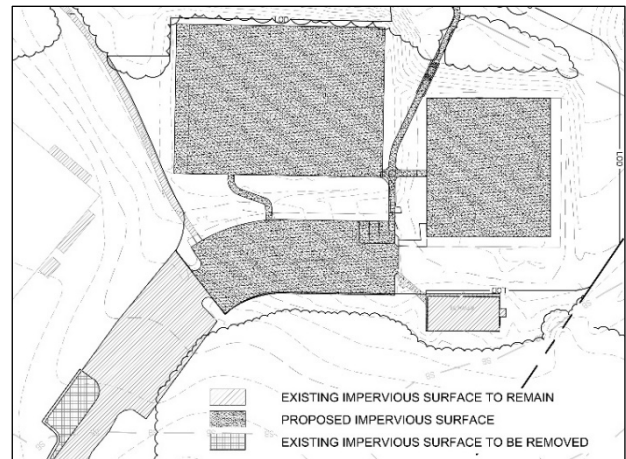


Figure 17: Proposed Site Impervious Surface

in order to maintain or reduce the site's overall impervious surface coverage. To achieve this, the parking lot in front of the proposed court area will be reconfigured to meet current design standards. The existing parking bays are wider than necessary, and removing excess paving will eliminate at least 2,000 square feet of impervious surface. Figure 18 shows the current estimated changes in impervious surface coverage, and these quantities will be refined through detailed design.

EXISTING IMPERVIOUS SURFACE TABLE			PROPOSED IMPERVIOUS SURFACE TABLE		
	AREA (SF)	PERCENT		AREA (SF)	PERCENT
PARKING/DRIVEWAY	52,798	4.89%	PARKING/DRIVEWAY	50,387	4.67%
SIDEWALK/PATH	11,184	1.04%	SIDEWALK/PATH	11,831	1.10%
PLAYGROUND	782	0.07%	PLAYGROUND	782	0.07%
SPORTS COURT	44,143	4.09%	SPORTS COURT	43,957	4.07%
PLAYER BENCH & BLEACHER	2,862	0.27%	PLAYER BENCH & BLEACHER	2,862	0.27%
SHADE STRUCTURE	1,861	0.17%	SHADE STRUCTURE	1,861	0.17%
SUBTOTAL	113,630	10.52%	SUBTOTAL	111,680	10.34%
PERVIOUS SURFACE	966,229	89.54%	PERVIOUS SURFACE	968,179	89.72%
Total Park Property Area	1,079,146		Total Park Property Area	1,079,146	
Offsite Disturbed Area	713		Offsite Disturbed Area	713	
TOTAL AREA	1,079,859	100%	TOTAL AREA	1,079,859	100%

Figure 18: Existing and Proposed Site Impervious Surface. Note that these figures may be adjusted through detailed design.

Utilities

Currently, the northern portion of Columbia Local Park is not served by any utilities. The plan proposes to provide a new water service from Briarcliff Manor Way to serve the new amenities. The water line will connect to two drinking fountains in the dog park (one in each enclosure) and another drinking fountain in the gathering space at the southwest corner of the court area.

Although several community members expressed support for lighting the dog park and soccer, pickleball and tennis courts, lighting is not included as part of this project. However, the Recommended Plan does not preclude the future installation of site lighting. If evening use of this park is deemed acceptable in the future, light fixtures can be incorporated with minimal interruption to park activities.

Stormwater Management

The plan will provide stormwater management based on current standards. This project will treat runoff from the impervious surfaces of the proposed site improvements without disrupting existing drainage patterns of surrounding unpaved areas. The approved stormwater management concept does not include formal treatment of the court area due to high groundwater. Two small bioretention facilities surrounding the dog park and courts will capture and treat runoff from the impervious

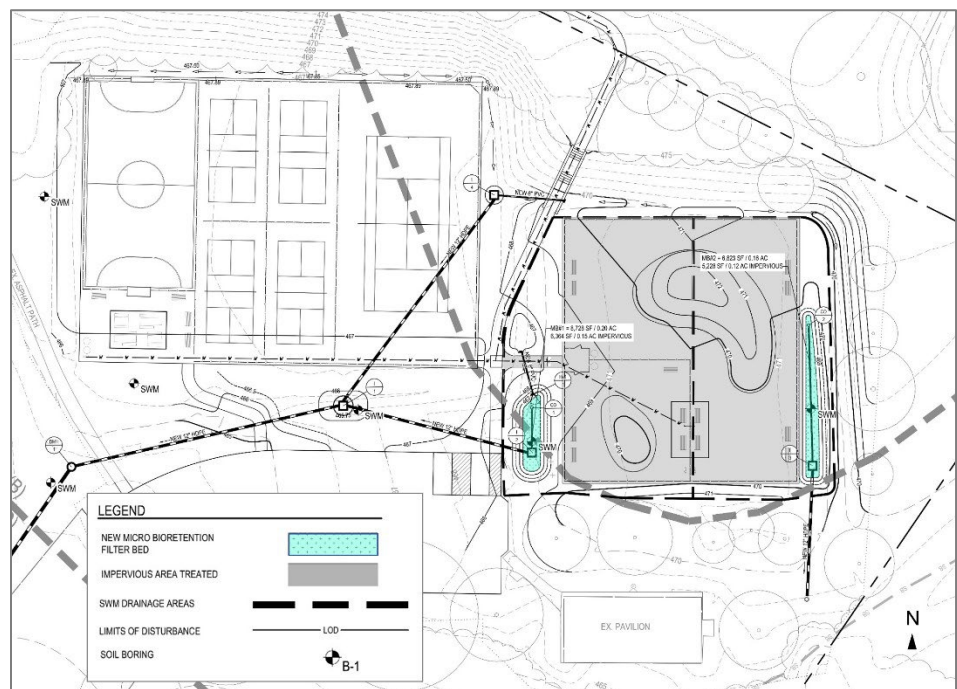


Figure 19: Proposed Stormwater Management

surfaces either by infiltrating runoff from small storm events back into the groundwater, or by detaining runoff from larger storm events before slowly releasing water to the existing stream that divides the northern and southern portions of Columbia Local Park.

Staff has identified additional strategies that could mitigate impervious surfaces and improve water quality for the northern portion of the park. Preliminary recommendations include removal of excess paving and the addition of MS4 stormwater management facilities. These improvements will be coordinated during the detailed design and construction phases.

COST ESTIMATE**Design and Construction Costs**

The overall anticipated cost for design and construction of this project is approximately \$2,600,000, based on the Recommended Facility Plan. Design components may be refined or modified during detailed design to meet changing site conditions and regulatory requirements. These modifications may impact the cost estimate, which will be evaluated further at the detailed design stage.

In March 2019, \$200,000 in State Bond Bill funding was nominated by Senator Craig Zucker and the District 14 Delegation and was awarded for renewing Columbia Local Park in Burtonsville. The intent of the funding was to improve the northern area of the park. The remainder of the project is proposed to be funded through the Park Refresher program. A summary of design and construction costs is outlined in the table below. A detailed cost estimate is included in Attachment E.

ITEM	TOTAL COST
Site Preparation & Demolition	\$ 244,800
Tree Protection	\$ 40,000
Sediment & Erosion Control	\$ 60,000
Earthwork	\$ 32,000
Stormwater Management & Storm Drainage	\$ 175,000
Utilities	\$ 75,000
Vehicular Pavement	\$ 84,000
Pedestrian Pavement & Hardscape	\$ 573,000
Landscaping	\$ 243,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 27,000
CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,713,000
Construction Contingency (30% of Construction Subtotal)	\$ 514,000
CONSTRUCTION TOTAL (Subtotal plus Contingencies)	\$ 2,226,000
Detailed design and permit	\$ 156,000
Staff chargeback for detailed design	\$ 69,000
Staff chargeback for construction management & inspection	\$ 140,000
TOTAL	\$ 2,589,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 2,600,000
TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT	\$ 35,000 – 40,000

Operating Budget Impact

Annual operating budget costs to maintain the park are expected to increase. Increased maintenance costs are associated with the new dog park, water service, stormwater management facilities, planting, and additional courts, shelters, and furniture. The total operating budget impact is estimated at approximately \$35,000 - \$40,000 per year and will be finalized during detailed design. A detailed estimate is included in Attachment F.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Recommended Facility Plan and associated cost estimate. Columbia Local Park is an important hub for recreational and social activity for residents of Burtonsville. Renovation of the northern park area and repurposing the abandoned tennis courts will optimize the function of existing facilities, activate the park, and help meet areawide recreational needs.

Attachments

- A. Public Meeting Notes (April 24, 2018)
- B. Public Correspondence
- C. 2018 Open Town Hall Report
- D. Forest Conservation Exemption (April 29th, 2021)
- E. Detailed Cost Estimate
- F. Operating Budget Impact
- G. 2021 Open Town Hall Report
- H. SPA Civil Drawings (October 25, 2019)
- I. Combined Preliminary and Final Water Quality Plan/Site Development Stormwater Management Plan (October 25, 2019)
- J. Water Quality Report (September 5, 2019)

Signature: 

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Final Audit Report

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