



July 28, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

July 21, 2016

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *MFR*

Mitra Pedoeem, Deputy Director of Parks for Administration *mit*

**FROM:** John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division (PPSD) *JEH*

Brooke Farquhar, Supervisor, Park and Trail Planning Section, PPSD *Brooke Farquhar*

Mark Wallis, Planner Coordinator, Park and Trail Planning Section, PPSD *(MSW)*

**SUBJECT:** Outline, Schedule and Outreach Plan for the *2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan Update*

**Requested Action: Discussion of Outline, Schedule and Outreach Plan**

**Background**

Staff requests the Board’s discussion of the outline, schedule and outreach strategy for the *2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master (PROS) Plan Update*. This Plan must be completed in conformance with Maryland State Guidelines (**Attachment 1**). The *2017 PROS Plan Update* will substitute for the state-mandated *Land, Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)* which is required every five-six years to maintain Program Open Space Grant Funding eligibility. The PROS Plan was last updated July, 2012. The schedule mandated by the State requires the 2017 Staff Draft Plan to be submitted by December 31, 2016 with Final Plan completion by July 1, 2017. As consistent with previous PROS plans, a Montgomery County Recreation Department Section will be incorporated as well. This will replicate a revised and updated *Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030, Update 2016*.

**Purpose**

The main purpose of the PROS Plan is to develop strategies to deliver the “right parks in the right places”. In an era of increasing competition for limited land and resources for a growing population, the PROS Plan helps guide priorities for park acquisition, renovation, development and preservation. The plan includes a policy framework and identifies future facility needs and resource conservation priorities. Chapters include information on Policy Framework, Urban Parks, Recreation and Park Needs, Natural Resources Stewardship, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Agricultural Land Preservation.

The *2017 PROS Plan Update* will prioritize urban parks funding and service delivery, while strategically planning trails and athletic fields to best meet future needs. It will include methods to achieve social equity, health, and conservation, the Three Pillars of the National Parks and Recreation Association.

The 2017 PROS Plan Update supports the park and recreation goals and objectives contained in the County's [1993 General Plan Refinement - Goals and Objectives](#). The new Plan will also build upon and expand the work of the current 2012 PROS Plan (**Attachment 3**). That plan introduced a new methodology and typology for urban park planning, service delivery strategies for 27 facility types, funding priorities for historic resources, and resource-based recreation.

When completed, the 2017 PROS Plan Update will provide guidance for:

- park and recreation recommendations in area and park master plans
- priorities for park acquisition, renovation and development
- recreation facility needs in the County up to the Year 2030
- urban parks acquisition and development
- natural resource stewardship
- priorities for stewardship of important historic resources in the County
- local agricultural land preservation programs

## Objectives

### State Objectives

At a minimum the Plan should, and will conform with the State Guidelines. Described in more detail in Attachment 1, those state that the Plan should include the following content at a minimum:

- 1. Plan Introduction:**
  - a. a general overview of county geography, population
  - b. an introduction to the existing system of preserved lands.
- 2. Parks and Recreation:**
  - a. updated inventory of assets and user demand information;
  - b. a level of service analysis to identify deficiencies and opportunities;
  - c. strategies for meeting recreational goals, addressing deficiencies, improving and managing county parks and recreation facilities over the next five years.
- 3. Natural Resource Land Conservation:**
  - a. update information, analysis, goals and strategies for managing and improving county natural resource conservation land networks.
- 4. Agricultural Land Preservation:**
  - a. update data on preserved lands;
  - b. provide the goals and strategies for improving the local program. Counties whose farmland preservation programs have NOT been certified by MDP and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation will need to provide more information than certified counties.

**5. Optional/Other: 5 – 9 - 2016**

- Consider reviewing relevant topics of significance in the county including but not limited to
- a. an economic analysis of parks, recreation and land conservation in the county
  - b. discussion of cultural resource preservation, historic preservation
  - c. tourism
  - d. education and environmental literacy

Per State requirements, the *2017 PROS Plan Update* will include items 1-4. Under item 5b, Optional, we plan to include, as our PROS Plans typically do, a dedicated chapter on Cultural Resources Stewardship. Item 5d will be addressed as well.

### **Additional Topics to be Addressed**

The *2017 PROS Plan Update* will include additional detail to help us focus on our County's identified priorities, using data-driven analysis to support a variety of service delivery and implementation recommendations. Some of the highlights include:

- **Urban Parks:** refine and enhance strategies for urban park planning, development and programming, and develop new strategies for funding as part of an Urban Parks Functional Plan
- **Trails:** reiterate service delivery strategies of the *Countywide Park Trails Plan*
- **Athletic Fields:** update future needs estimates, service delivery strategies, and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) priorities
- **Resource-based Recreation:** assess needs and propose service delivery strategies
- **Facility-based Recreation:** update needs, service delivery strategies, and priorities
- **Park Classification System:** refine and clarify park types definitions and associated uses
- **Trends:** identify trends and service delivery strategies for new facility types
- **Social Equity, Health, and Conservation:** propose policy guidance to implement the Three Pillars of National Parks and Recreation Association
- **Cultural Resources:** identify, stabilize, preserve, maintain, and interpret historic and archaeological resources on parkland

The following sources will be used to guide the PROS Plan:

1. Park customer input – community meetings, surveys, online comments, etc.
2. Research of park strategic plans in other jurisdictions of similar context
3. Past M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks PROS Plans, *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, and other M-NCPPC Plans & *Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030*
4. Emerging Trends – demographic, lifestyle, facility and program
5. State Guidelines (*Final Draft LPPRP Guidelines, July 2015*)
6. Staff Experience

## Vision 2030

The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation (Vision 2030)* will be reviewed to ensure that the *2017 PROS Plan Update* recommendations reconfirm the goals and objectives identified in that plan for both parks and recreation services.

## Outreach

Outreach for the *2017 PROS Plan Update* will include a new survey for several recreational activities, including both facility-based recreation and resource-based recreation. We will be engaging the public through a variety of channels including online resources, traditional outreach to the media and communities at events, festivals, community meetings and targeted focus groups.

## Schedule

---

### 2016

#### Spring: Preliminary Work

1. Launch webpage and online comment tool
2. Develop a detailed outline of the Plan - **Attachment 2**

#### Summer: Analysis

1. July 28: brief Planning Board on Outline, Schedule and Outreach
2. Develop and administer two surveys, one for athletic fields, and another for other facility-based and resource-based recreation
3. Analyze results of survey
4. Staff work on preliminary content

#### Fall: Outreach

- September: Focus group meetings
- October: Community meetings on preliminary content

#### Winter: Staff Draft

- November: Writing and graphics
- December: Transmit preliminary draft to State

---

### 2017

#### January-February: community meetings

- March: Adjustments based on input
- April: Planning Board review of Staff Draft and post Public Hearing Draft
- May-June:
  1. Public Hearing

2. Worksessions and approval of final document

**July 1, 2017:**

- Submittal to State (Completion of County's Facility Plan Update, 2016)

**Attachments:**

**Attachment 1 - Draft *Guidelines for State and Local Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Planning*, July 2015**

**Attachment 2 - Proposed Outline for the *2017 PROS Plan Update***

**Attachment 3 - *2012 PROS Plan***

pc:

Gabriel Albornoz, Director, Montgomery County Recreation Department  
Jeffrey A. Bourne, Chief, Facilities & Capital Programs Division, Department of Recreation  
Robin Riley, Chief, Facility Operations Division, Department of Recreation  
William Kaarid, CIP/PLAR Manager, Montgomery County Recreation Department  
John Nissel, Deputy Director of Parks Operations, Department of Parks  
Jim Poore, Chief, Facilities Management Division, Department of Parks  
Doug Ludwig, Chief, Northern Parks, Department of Parks  
Bill Tyler, Chief, Southern Parks, Department of Parks  
David Vismara, Chief, Horticulture Forestry and Environmental Education Division, Department of Parks  
Christy Turnbull, Chief, Enterprise Division, Department of Parks  
Tony Devaul, Chief, Park Police Division, Department of Parks  
Shuchi Vera, Chief, Management Services Division, Department of Parks  
Michael Ma, Acting Chief, Park Development Division  
Kristi Williams, Chief, Public Affairs & Community Partnerships Division, Department of Parks  
Gwen Wright, Director, Planning Department  
Pamela Zorich, Planner Coordinator, Research and Special Projects, Planning Department