

Semi-Annual Report

Fall 2014



Montgomery County Department of Parks | Montgomery County Planning Department
MontgomeryParks.org | MontgomeryPlanning.org
M-NCPPC Montgomery County

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Letter from the Chair

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Letter from the Chair



President Rice and Members of the Council:

I am excited to present the latest achievements of the Planning Board, Planning Department and Department of Parks in our Fall 2014 Semi-Annual Report. We are working hard to respond to the economic, social and demographic changes that are transforming our community.

When I was selected to serve as Planning Board Chair, I said we should rethink our approach to development to be more responsive to the increasing demand for housing in close proximity to retail, businesses and employment options along with high quality transit service, while also providing open and green spaces for recreation and protection of natural resources. I think we have broad agreement that land use policy and regulation must be more closely connected to economic development, housing and transportation needs while improving public engagement.

The planning efforts and park projects outlined in this report support this emerging consensus about the direction that the county and our agency should take, and I am pleased to note the progress of several initiatives that advance this perspective:

- The White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan approved by the County Council in July reflects the recognition of the need to encourage investment and job creation, especially in the life sciences.
- The Clarksburg Master Plan Limited Amendment adopted in April for the protection of the Ten Mile Creek watershed shows a commitment to preservation of natural resources and environmental health.
- The approval of a new dog park abutting downtown Silver Spring and the opening of Carroll Knolls Neighborhood Park respond to the need for urban parks and new amenities in the downcounty.
- The Aspen Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment presented to the Planning Board in July demonstrates a willingness to adapt to the changing office and retail market.

- The Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan approved in July by the Planning Board for a public hearing shows an appreciation for the value of both new mixes of land uses in a rural village setting and the preservation of the area's cultural history.
- Our technical assistance for the Purple Line and the inclusion of pedestrian-oriented streetscapes in area master plans are based on a desire to help improve the quality of the public realm while offering new transportation options. In the same vein, a new Parks Department initiative will clear snow and sleet from portions of the Capital Crescent Trail to supports its use for commuting in the winter, and the new zoning code updates automobile and bicycle parking requirements.

Active public outreach efforts have helped to improve the quality of each of these projects, and it has made them more relevant to our communities. Our planners are experimenting with new ways to reach out to community members who do not typically participate in the planning process. We have used social media, happy hours, and interactive presentation tools to improve the quality and quantity of public engagement in the Bethesda Downtown Plan and Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan, making participation in the planning process more informative, interesting, and meaningful for citizens.

I am excited by the strides the Planning Department has made in strengthening its reputation as a regional and national leader in generating new ideas. The MM2: Moving Forward Montgomery Conference, cosponsored with the University of Maryland, drew more than 300 people to discuss cutting-edge planning concepts during three days in May. Many of these strategies are being implemented as part of the county's new zoning ordinance and ongoing master planning efforts.

Challenges still ahead include improvements to the development review process, implementation of the new Zoning Ordinance – including training for staff in its application - and a focus on the Design Excellence Initiative. The approved FY15 budget also enables us to undertake major projects such as a review of transportation tests and forecasting tools and the Rental Housing Study. This work is critical to provide transportation capacity in support of economic development and job creation and to improve access to high quality housing options at every income level. By the time of the next semiannual report I hope to be able to present some early results from these projects as well as new ideas in the areas of active recreation and urban parks.

With stiff competition from other jurisdictions for jobs and residents, parks and planning are more important than ever in maintaining and improving the County's attractiveness as a place to live and do business. I look forward to working with dedicated teams from both Departments and with the Council and Executive to make sure we are ready to meet the needs of the future.

Respectfully submitted,



Casey Anderson
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board and
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Department of Parks

INTRODUCTION

Transformation in communities and the environment around us is constant and inspiring. It is critical that Montgomery Parks stay abreast of community needs, opportunities for improvement and change; after all, that's the only way we'll ensure we are achieving our mission and providing citizens with the parks, programs and services they need. Transformation isn't limited to the world around us, however. The Department is currently undergoing a transformation of its own, with the appointment of a new Director, and openings in several key leadership positions vacated by senior-level staff who retired after decades of dedicated service to the Department and the residents of Montgomery County.

PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES

Urban Parks Initiative

Offering active, vibrant urban parks that provide essential open space and meet the needs of diverse users is a priority for Montgomery Parks. Since adopting the 2012 Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan, which identified increased need for active urban parks in Montgomery County, and which included new Urban Park Guidelines by Montgomery County's Nighttime Economy Task Force, Montgomery Parks has taken a number of steps to plan, construct, renovate and activate urban parks, including:

- Ensuring that every Area Master Plan includes an urban open space system.
- Beginning the planning process for new parks in existing and developing urban centers and Central Business Districts, such as seeking additional parkland in Silver Spring, offsite parking to allow renovation of Wall Park in White Flint, staff proposals for a network of green gathering places and recreational parks in Bethesda, and an urban neighborhood park in Chevy Chase Lakes;
- Contributing to the recommendations of Montgomery County's Nighttime Economy Task Force;
- Gaining approval to begin construction in the spring of 2015 on the County's first Urban Dog Park at Ellsworth Urban Park;
- Developing plans for urban parks in need of renovation. Plans are approved or underway for Battery Lane Urban



Park, Elm Street Urban Park, Caroline Freeland Urban Park, Wall Urban Park, and Norwood Local Park;

- Beginning design for Kemp Mill Urban Park, Western Grove Urban Park and Woodside Urban Park; and
- Continuing construction at Germantown Town Center Urban Park, which is expected to open in Spring 2015.

Support from Council, private developers and the community is critical to ensuring that County residents benefit from urban park facilities throughout the County. Montgomery Parks' efforts to create and activate urban parks have been supported by:

- The Planning Board;
- The Montgomery County Council, who approved a new funding source for Urban Park Elements to help quickly meet needs in urban areas for in-demand facilities like dog parks and skate parks; and
- Private developers, who have incorporated much needed urban park facilities in plans for communities including the Blairs, Chevy Chase Lakes, and the Gables.

Moving forward, enhancing how Montgomery Parks plans, operates and programs urban parks is a priority for the Department. Next steps include:



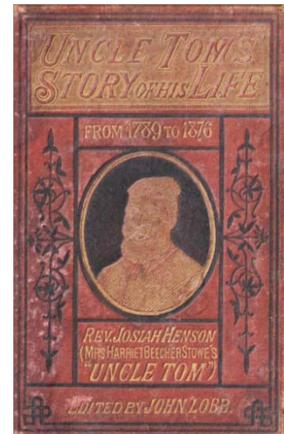
- Completing a site selection study to determine what urban park facilities are most needed in existing parks and priority areas for acquisition;
- Proposing additional incentives in area master plans to proactively plan suitable urban park facilities in the right places; and
- Creating a plan that outlines staffing, training, equipment and other resources needed to properly operate, maintain, program, police and market urban parks, which are used at a significantly greater intensity than most other parks.

Montgomery Parks Foundation

The Board of Trustees and Staff of the Montgomery Parks Foundation continue to build a robust and sustainable fundraising organization to support Montgomery Parks. The Foundation is focusing on collaborative processes with Department of Parks staff to prioritize and identify projects that will appeal to donors and other funders to create new revenue sources. These efforts include capital campaigns, major gift programs, grants/bond bills, tribute/dedication programs, corporate sponsorships and a membership program. The 2014 calendar year (CY) fundraising goal for the Foundation is just under \$1.2 million dollars, a 59% increase from the CY13 revenue goal of \$742,000 which was achieved. The Foundation will not only meet the FY14 goal, but exceed it considerably. Some of the Foundation's recent accomplishments include:



- Securing a \$1 million dollar donation to fund the construction of a **greenhouse**, in addition to obtaining more than 200 gifts totaling over \$350,000 to support **Master Plan Renovations at Brookside Gardens**;
- The award of a \$75,000 grant from the Meyer Foundation to support the **Josiah Henson Park Capital Campaign**; this campaign seeks to solicit over two million dollars in private donations to support the educational components at Josiah Henson Park;
- Raising more than \$10,000 through the Friends of Montgomery Parks program so far in this calendar year;
- Securing a \$5,000 pledge from Kona Ice to support Montgomery Parks for the fourth year in a row; the total donated by Kona Ice now stands at \$20,000; and
- Establishing an **internal grant work group** to create functional processes and criteria for prioritization of outside funding opportunities.



Community Outreach

Community input and involvement in projects is critical to providing parks, facilities, programs and services that meet the needs of our residents and communities. Such input helps ensure that needs and priorities of communities are taken into consideration, and that communities are invested in and take advantage of our park system. An important component of obtaining community input, of course, is conducting effective outreach and increasing awareness of all that the Department offers. Some examples of community involvement and outreach efforts that have made a large impact over the past several months include:



- The **opening of Carroll Knolls Local Park** on Georgia Avenue in the Silver Spring-Wheaton corridor in the Spring of 2014. The steadfast involvement of residents, community organizations and local leaders supportive of this park enabled the Department preserve natural areas and open space in an increasingly dense region of the County;
- Community outreach and meetings regarding the Good Hope Neighborhood Recreation Center, the Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park Master Plan Update, and Wheaton-Claridge Local Park, which have informed and engaged residents in planning and renovation efforts for these parks.
- A presentation to the **Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities** regarding the Department's ADA program and efforts to date, and on how people from the disabled community can provide input regarding future park projects; and
- A pilot project entitled **El Carro Rojo**, or the Red Wagon Project, which was initiated by members of the Department's Leadership Development Program and aims to connect ethnically diverse communities with Montgomery Parks by providing information, demonstrations, and answering questions at multiple locations – and in multiple languages.

Trails

Montgomery Parks maintains more than 200 miles of trails, including Natural Surface Trails, Paved Hiker/Biker Trails, and Multi-Use Trails. These trails are some of the most popular amenities within our park system, and play an important role in supporting active lifestyles and connecting people to nature.



Vision 2030, a strategic long-range plan for parks and recreation, included several recommendations related to enhancing and expanding our important trail system. In order to address those recommendations, Montgomery Parks has:

- Concentrated on expanding the distribution of multi-use trails, particularly in high density areas with limited trail access, renovating existing trails for sustainability and developing improved directional and wayfinding signage for trails;
- Recommended trail improvements and additions in every area master plan to expand or enhance trail service in urban or urbanizing areas;
- Begun developing the staff draft of the Countywide Park Trails Plan Amendment, which aims to more effectively target future trail investments in areas of the County with either low levels of trail service or projected high population densities;
- Installed five fiberglass bridges to enhance sustainability of a popular trail along the Muddy Branch and to expand service at Upper Rock Creek Trail;
- Re-routed portions of natural surface trails to stabilize tread, reduce runoff and improve the user experience; rerouted trails include more than a half mile of the Timber Ridge Trail in Little Bennett Regional Park and a quarter mile of the Cabin John Trail in Bethesda; and
- Begun several hard surface trail projects within the Parks Capital Improvements Program, including Final Design for the North Branch Trail, renovation of Wheaton Regional Park Trail at Pine Lake, Facility Planning for renovation and improvements to the Rock Creek Trail Stream Valley Units 1-3, the Little Bennett Regional Park Trail Connector to expand service to the Day Use Area, development and installation of improved Hiker/Biker Trail Signage along 14 miles of the Rock Creek Trail, and smaller repair, renovation and trail connector projects at Layhill Village Park, the Capital Crescent Trail, and the Rock Creek Trail.

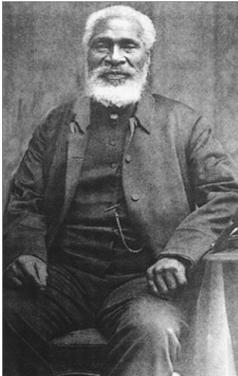


Historic and Cultural Preservation and Interpretation



Preserving, restoring and interpreting historic and archaeological sites and resources on Montgomery Parks parkland is a critical part of the Department's mission. With 117 standing historic structures on 43 historic sites, and approximately 400 archeological sites, the Department

has an extensive inventory of historical sites and responsibilities. However, although each of the historic resources in our extensive inventory was acquired with the best of “preservation” intentions, many sites exist in various states of disrepair. Only a few sites have been fully restored and are open to the public on a regular and routine basis. **Challenges faced by Montgomery Parks’ Cultural Resources program include** inadequate capital funding for the restoration and preservation of historic structures and inadequate annual operating funds for interpretive and educational programming. Recent program accomplishments include:



Josiah Henson Park was the subject of a national PBS Broadcast called **Time Team America** which focused on a three-day archaeological excavation on Henson Park and nearby properties that uncovered evidence and artifacts from Henson’s time.

- In order to prioritize funding that is available for restoration, preservation and operations, Montgomery Parks staff has worked with the National Park Service on the development of a Cultural Resources Asset Inventory Database. Resources in this database are prioritized based on their preservation index and current condition. The Program also uses its Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources in Parks to plan for uses for vacant buildings. Uses are identified in broad categories, such as best for rental, public/private partnership, or Park-related use.
- The program has embarked upon an architectural salvage operation wherein pieces from lost buildings are retained for future building rehab at critical sites. The Program also continues to work with private owners on acquiring and/or receiving donations of valuable museum collection items for exhibit;
- The Department completed the rehabilitation of the **Bussard Farmhouse Kitchen** to the post-Depression era of the Bussard occupation based on photographic evidence at the Agricultural History Farm Park; began rehabilitation of and thematic exhibits for **the historic stone barn** that will become the centerpiece of the Woodlawn Visitor Center at Woodlawn Manor Park in Sandy Spring, and began exterior stabilization of the **Jesup Blair House**, the last remaining home of the town’s founding family.



As the Cultural Resources Program moves forward, priorities include acquiring funding for a second career archaeologist to focus primarily on critical archaeological investigations at Josiah Henson Special Park and the upgrading of the lab and collections to mandated state requirements, and a second career museum manager to focus primarily on the Bussard Farm at the Agricultural History Farm Park.

Consolidated Registration System

Montgomery Parks has collaborated with the Montgomery County Department of Recreation and Community Use of Public Facilities to develop a consolidated registration system for agency customers.

The system, ActiveNet, will allow residents to register for programs and facilities offered by each agency through a single registration system rather than through three separate systems. Progress to date includes several interagency meetings to review project launch details including issues around IT, financial practices, software functionality, project schedules and phasing.

The current schedule envisions that registration for Montgomery Parks classes and programs will go live in mid-August 2015 for Fall session registrations.

Non-Native Invasives

Despite the efforts of volunteers, staff and contractors, Montgomery Parks is literally losing ground in the battle against Non-Native Invasive plants (NNIs). These fast-growing, aggressive species are overgrowing many of our County's most important natural areas, displacing native plants and sabotaging reforestation efforts, which reduces both biodiversity and wildlife habitat. **An estimated 50% of parkland natural areas, or 13,000 acres, are currently impacted by non-native invasive plants, and hundreds of acres of these areas are**



completely overwhelmed by them. One huge challenge faced by staff trying to combat these plants is the speed at which these plants spread. Wavy leaf basketgrass, can grow from a small patch to over 20 acres within a couple years; Mile-a-minute can overgrow a young plant or shrub in a matter of weeks; and the ubiquitous Bradford Pear, has claimed hundreds of acres of parkland in recent years. Despite support from the Montgomery Parks Weed Warrior program which has provided more than 63,200 total hours of volunteer support to combating invasive plants since 1999, the challenge is made even greater by the loss of key staff during the recession. **Without a significant increase in our efforts, we stand to lose the ecological integrity of thousands of acres of parkland.**

White-Tail Deer Management

Montgomery Parks' deer management program aims to reduce and maintain deer populations in accordance with the goals of the County's deer management plan. **In order to respond to requests from communities and the County Council regarding deer management, the Department has:**



- Initiated new deer management efforts in Cabin John Regional Park in early 2014, utilizing the Park Police sharpshooting program;
- Conducted deer population surveys, mapped legal safety zones, developed added safety zones, identified potential shooting locations, contacted and coordinated with park managers, developed schedules for potential management and associated park closures to insure there are no conflicts, and developed plans for park closure signage along perimeters and at all official and

“people’s choice” entrances into parks, in preparation for additional management efforts that will be proposed for four new park locations;

- Begun preparing community outreach about approved and proposed deer management efforts.

PARKS & FACILITIES

Parks and facilities are constantly transforming to ensure that residents have access to clean, safe and accessible parks. Major projects that have been completed or that are currently underway include:

- **The design of the new Wheaton Headquarters** to house Montgomery Parks, the Montgomery Planning Department, the Department of Permitting Services, the Department of Environmental Protection, and Wheaton Regional Service Center is in progress. The project, which also includes a Town Square and a 4-level underground parking



garage, is part of an initiative to support the redevelopment of the Wheaton Central Business District. Thus far, the contract with the developer to design and construct the project has been executed, and the architect has met with all stakeholders to refine and finalize the Program of Requirements for the agencies. We expect that the schematic design of the building and site development plans will be ready for review in November; the interior space planning will be ready for review in January 2015.

- **The renovation and expansion of Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park** in Silver Spring has been completed. It is the first park designed to be certified by the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES). SITES was created to transform land development and management practices through the nation’s first voluntary guidelines and rating system for sustainable



landscapes, with or without buildings. The renovated park includes an additional 2.46 acres of land and features two half-court basketball courts, new playground equipment, paved pedestrian loop trails, rain gardens, and Wi-Fi. A notable aspect of this project was the conversion of an existing concrete-lined channel through the park into a naturalized restored stream.

- **Brookside Gardens** is undergoing a major transformation to its Visitors Center to provide a safe, sustainable and aesthetic entrance to welcome visitors accommodating pedestrian and vehicular access, additional parking, new garden displays and much-needed multi-functional outdoor

space. The ponds and dams located in the Gude Garden have been repaired and restored to their original beauty and function. Brookside Gardens held a fundraising event on June 25 that raised nearly \$425,000 in private donations for the master plan.



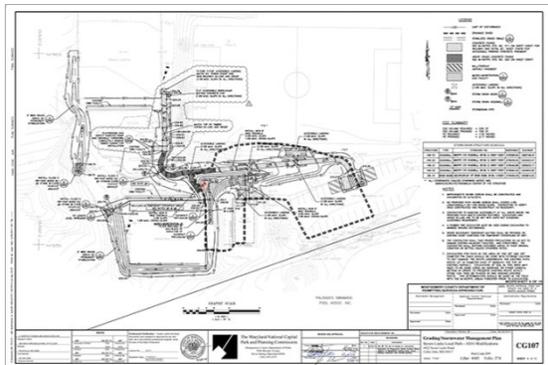
- Construction has begun for the rehabilitation of the historic stone bank barn at the Woodlawn Visitor Center at Woodlawn Park in Sandy Spring. The stone barn will feature an interpretive program of exhibits and multimedia programs showcasing aspects of Montgomery County's history, including the Underground Railroad, the Quaker Experience and the barn as a feature of the County's agricultural landscape. The project is expected to be complete in Spring 2015.
- The renovation and expansion of **North Four Corners Local Park** is underway and is expected to be completed by Winter 2015. New features that are being added to the park include a regulation size rectangular field, walking paths, plaza area with game tables, new parking lot accessed from University Boulevard, exercise equipment, playground, and landscaping throughout including extensive invasive removal. In addition, accessibility improvements are being made to the existing parking lot and access routes to recreation building, tennis courts and basketball court.
- Construction has begun at **Greenbriar Local Park** in Potomac, and is expected to be complete in the spring of 2015. The 25-acre parcel will be turned into a new park with a regulation sized soccer / football field, a basketball court, volleyball court, playground and paved paths.



Charts providing information on the status of all major projects underway are provided at the end of this report.

Required Federal & State Mandates

Montgomery Parks remains committed to fulfilling required Federal and State mandates, including ensuring that **ADA compliance and accessibility** are incorporated throughout the park system's planning, design, construction and operational processes and expanding efforts related to the Department's **Phase II National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer**



System (MS4) Permit . Some highlights include:

- In FY14, Montgomery Parks **completed approximately 80% of self-evaluations** of park properties and facilities required per an ADA Settlement Agreement; we anticipate that all required audits will be completed approximately a year ahead of schedule;
- **Accessibility improvements have been made or are underway at several parks**, including Seven Locks Local Park, Nolte Local Park, Burning Tree Local Park, Argyle Local Park, Rosemary Hills Local Park, Westmoreland Hills Local Park, Meadowbrook Local Park, and the Little Bennett Group Camping area;
- **NPDES Stormwater crews** have been diligently working to keep trash out of ponds, to keep stormwater facilities functioning properly, and to reduce excessive levels of nutrients in our stormwater facilities;
- A variety of projects were installed throughout the parks to **manage stormwater runoff** on parkland and improve water quality including bioretention facilities, removal of impervious surfaces and wetland creation/enhancement;
- A wide variety of **pollution prevention initiatives** were undertaken including improvements to pesticide application practices, nuisance wildlife management and reforestation;
- **Educational opportunities for staff were expanded and enhanced** to include Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training, Registered Pesticide Applicator training, and an improved Pollution Prevention Training; and
- Montgomery Parks teamed up with the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection in inspecting and screening for illicit discharges in the storm drain network within the Little Falls Watershed.

Montgomery Parks also continues to work on stream restoration projects related to the InterCounty Connector (ICC) and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) Consent Decree. Ongoing WSSC projects include repair work at Rock Creek Regional Park and several Rock Creek Stream Valley Units as well as a new consent decree project on the west side of Lake Needwood which will result in the re-routing of many nearby trails. Stream restoration projects related to the ICC include restoration of Good Hope stream, which has been completed, and ongoing work at Manor Run, Hollywood Branch, and a tributary to Northwest Branch below Bonifant Road.

Partnerships & Volunteers

Volunteerism by residents, community groups, corporations, and students significantly enhance staffing and outreach in parks, facilities and programs offered by Montgomery Parks. From staffing special events to taking an active role in protecting park resources through trail work days, stream and park cleanups, and more, volunteers often support programs and projects the Department would otherwise be unable to offer and help bridge the gap between the agency and the citizens we serve. **In FY14, 13,000 volunteers provided the equivalent of over 40 work years of additional labor in service to parks; this additional labor is valued at over one million dollars.** Some accomplishments include:

- **Engaging more than 5,000 volunteers and removing more than 75 tons of trash** from parks and streams through the Department's park and stream cleanup program and collaborations with several regional environmental and volunteer organizations including The Alice Ferguson

Foundation, Rock Creek Conservancy, the Anacostia Watershed Society, the Friends of Sligo Creek and the Montgomery County Volunteer Center.

- **Engaged more than 765 volunteers who completed more than 4,876 hours of trail work** through activities including trail inspection surveys and trail work days for individuals, students groups, and corporate volunteer groups.
- **Pairing 300 volunteers with projects throughout parks and facilities as part of the annual Marriott Spirit to Serve Day.** Projects supported by these volunteers included tree mulching/protection at Black Hill Regional Park, the repair, replacement and addition of tree cages at a reforestation site in Rock Creek, removal of non-native plants in various locations, and native plant and tree plantings.
- **Collaborating with youth- and conservation-focused job corps programs**, including the Conservation Job Corp which paired 25 young adults with environmental and conservation projects throughout the parks system, and the Student Conservation Association, a grant-funded program that paired a crew of young adults with natural surface trail projects for a five-week period.
- **Partnering with local organizations, including the ARC of Montgomery County**, who provide crews that assist with weekly litter control at up to thirteen parks throughout the year. In FY14, the ARC donated over 5,200 volunteer hours to this effort, thereby significantly reducing the amount of trash that would otherwise pollute parks and streams.
- **Obtaining grant support for reforestation projects**, which offered environmental education activities to high school students both through classroom activities and volunteer efforts to plant, mulch and protect 276 trees at Muddy Branch Stream Valley Park and Sligo Creek Stream valley Units 3 and 4.



Partnerships with community organizations and businesses also provide a means to propel our parks, facilities and programs forward. Currently, the Department manages 24 partnerships, which vary from “adopt-a-field” agreements to partnerships with the Hyattstown Mill Arts Project, Maryland SoccerPlex, Red Wiggler Community Farm, Potomac Horse Center, and Meadowbrook Stables – all of which extend the Department’s ability to achieve its mission. All partnerships include lease or license agreements that are regularly amended or renewed. The establishment of new policies and procedures for screening and evaluating partnerships, investment in long term infrastructure needs and technical assistance in business management and management and fundraising, as well as improved information management and increased oversight of partners promise to protect the continued success of our partnership program.

Events and Programs

Events and programs that residents enjoy and that promote a strong sense of community is essential to a parks system that promotes healthy lifestyles and is treasured by the community. Montgomery Parks engages residents through a variety of activities, including special events and festivals, spring and summer camps for children, nature center and gardening programs, ice and tennis programs and more. Some highlights of activities and accomplishments over the last few months include:

- Celebrating nature, wildlife, and history through multiple festivals including the Raptor Rules Festival, Forest Friends Festival, Bluebirds Forever Festival, Great Outdoors Festival, Family Archaeology Day, and Heritage Days events.
- Teaching ice skating skills to more than 1,100 children and adults who registered for spring ice classes at Wheaton Ice Arena and Cabin John Ice.
- Engaging more than 1,710 children in a variety of spring and summer camps which featured everything from tennis, golf, ice skating and skateboarding camps to outdoor adventure, nature and archaeology camps.



Sustainability

Montgomery Parks has made great strides to implement sustainability practices to help support healthy communities, economic vitality, and protection of the natural environment. For the last year, Montgomery Parks staff have been working as part of a Sustainability Coordinating Committee to identify ways to:

- Conserve electricity, natural gas, fuel oil, motor fuel and water;
- Establish management strategies which meet nationally accepted sustainability certifications for energy conservation and use of renewable resources;
- Procure goods and services with sustainability and efficiency in mind;
- Implement green development strategies in community planning, landscape design and site planning;
- Identify and implement training to introduce staff to sustainability practices;
- Promote safety, health, and wellness through our work place programs and services, and more.

Recommendations have been compiled into a draft two-year Sustainability Plan that will be presented to the Planning Board in the Fall of 2014.

Success & Accolades

Montgomery Parks staff strives for excellence in all they do to serve the public through high quality parks, facilities and programs. We're proud to be recognized by industry leaders for some of our work, and have received the following accolades over the past several months:

- Six awards from the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA), including the Planning and Design with Environmental Protection in Mind Award, Creative Programming Award for Minnow Minutes, Agency Volunteer Award, MRPA Agency Showcase Award for Best Photography, MRPA Agency Showcase Award for Best Website for History in the Parks, and MRPA Agency Showcase Award for Best Activity Guide.
- The prestigious Traveling Award from the Potomac and Maryland Chapters of the American Society of Landscape Architects for the Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area Facility Plan. The Traveling Award is the top honor reserved for a project that uniquely reflects and solves the most current issues in landscape architecture through innovative design excellence.
- Brookside Gardens has been certified as a 2014 Maryland Green Center by The Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE). Maryland Green Centers are part

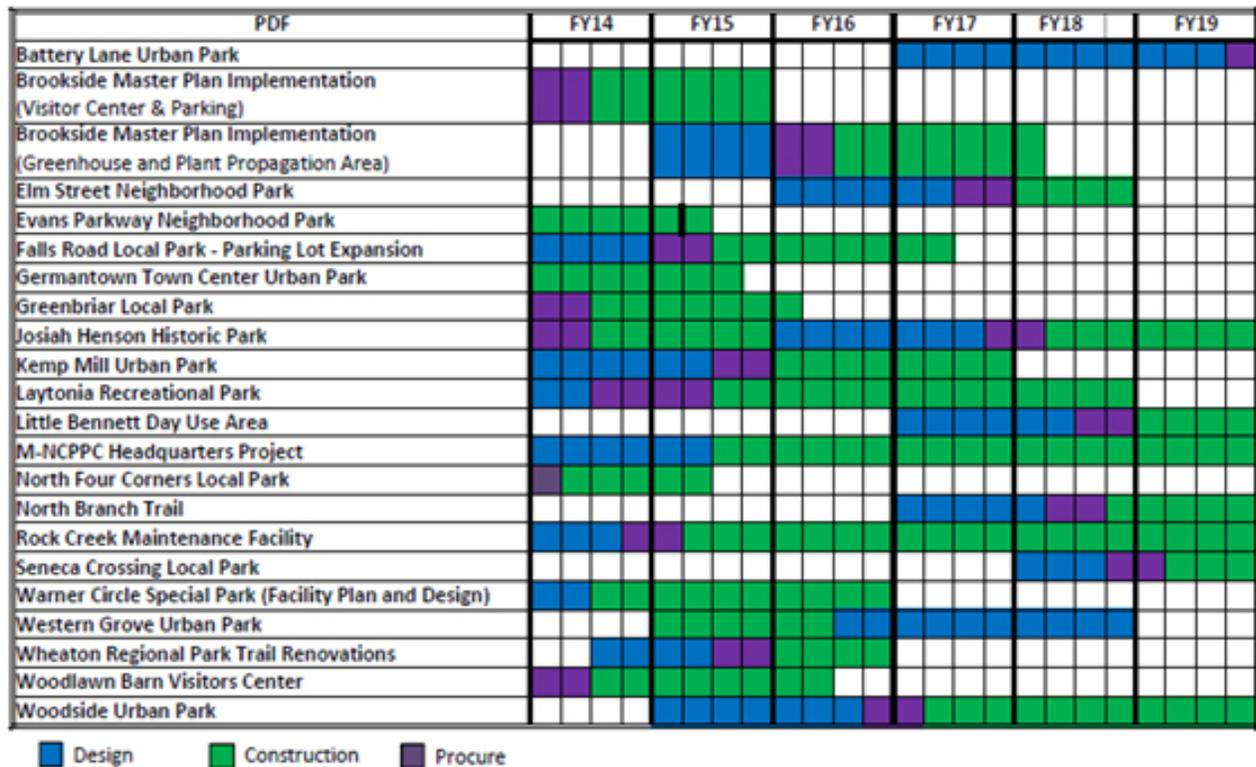
of the Maryland Green School Program, a nationally recognized program begun in 1999 to promote environmental literacy, sustainability and best practices. Brookside Gardens' certification was earned through a holistic, integrated approach to incorporating environmental education and practices with community stewardship. This is a significant accomplishment, representing a commitment to environmental literacy for staff, students and the community.

- **Black Hill Nature Programs is now officially a City Partners for Flying Wild**, an internationally recognized education program to engage students in bird biology, conservation, and stewardship! They are the second City Partner in the State, alongside the Ward Waterfowl Museum in Salisbury. BHNP will serve as a leader in training program facilitators in the Flying Wild model, connect educators with Flying Wild trainings and resources, and will assist schools with implementing Flying Wild activities to meet environmental literacy goals.

CHARTS

Status of CIP and Master Plan Projects

Fall 2014 Semi-Annual Report: Schedule for Major CIP Projects



Major Projects Completed in FY14

- Black Hill Trail Renovation and Extension
- Broadacres LP Renovation
- Darnestown Square Local Park
- East Norbeck Local Park
- Lake Needwood Modification
- Rock Creek Sewer System Improvements

PARK & TRAIL PLANNING MAJOR PROJECTS SCHEDULE Last updated: 09-16-14	2 0 1 4												2 0 1 5											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	FY 14						FY 15						FY 16											
MANDATORY REFERRAL PLANS, LAND EXCHANGES																								
Purple Line FEIS																								
Farquhar Middle School																								
Woodacres Park School																								
Good Hope Community Recreation Center																								
Ireland Drive Trail																								
M-83 MidCounty Highway																								
Wheaton Community Center Land Exchange																								
Arcola Elementary School																								
BCC Middle School																								
Boyd's MARC Transit																								
PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE in PLANNING DEPARTMENT PLANS																								
Purple Line at Terminus (Apex)		A																						
Sandy Spring Rural Village																								
Subdivision Staging/Growth Policy																								
Functional Plan for Co-location of Public Facilities																								
Greater Lyttonsville																								
Aspen Hill and Vicinity																								
White Oak Science Gateway																								
White Flint II																								
Gaithersburg East/Montgomery Village Sector Plan																								
Potomac Village or Westbard																								
Clarksburg - 10 Mile Creek																								
Functional Plan for Housing																								
Master Plan of Highways-Land Use Near Transitways																								
Aspen Hill Property (Vitro)																								
Bethesda CBD																								
Recreation Guidelines																								

COLOR KEY	STAFF WORK	I ISSUES/OBJECTIVES/0	S STAFF DRAFT
P PLANNING BOARD DISCUSSION	PH PUBLIC HEARING	AP PLANNING BOARD APPROVAL	A COUNCIL ADOPTION

Parkland Acquisition and Disposition – April 2014 through September 2014				
PARK	FORMER OWNER	ACRES	COST	ACCOUNT #
Little Seneca Greenway SVP	Clarksburg Village, L.C	3.9	Dedication	02-03594218, 02-03594390
Little Seneca Greenway SVP	Toll MD II, Limited Partnership	29.5303	Dedication	02-03429654, 02-03429643
Norbeck-Muncaster Mill Neighborhood Park	Julio & Marsha Zangroniz	0.8926	\$325,000.00	08-00708170
Muddy Branch SVU #1	Christopher & Nancy Weaver	7.68	\$761,250.00	06-00404475
Silver Spring Transit Center Plaza	WMATA	0.263	Easement	N/A
Gene Lynch Urban Park	WMATA	0.266	Easement	13-0373500
Silver Spring Metro Park	WMATA	-0.8116	Easement	N/A
Totals		41.7203	\$1,086,250.00	

Planning Department

OVERVIEW – MAJOR GOALS AND TRENDS

The Montgomery Planning Department is continuing to evolve in order to respond to the changing nature of land use and development in the county. Not only has the Department successfully moved master planning efforts in the direction of a finer-grain approach with extensive community participation, but we have begun to put in place the tools that will allow us to grow in a more nimble, urban, and sustainable way.

The first of these tools is the new Zoning Ordinance, which will take effect October 30, 2014 and provides more understandable, clear and coherent zoning regulations that will be easier to use and to enforce. It offers a better organization of uses and zones, clearer procedures for approval and a solid foundation in modern planning and design principles. The Montgomery Planning Department is now focused on **implementing the new Zoning Ordinance and providing training** to other County agencies and potential applicants on the best practices for using the new code.



With an excellent new Zoning Ordinance in place, the next step is to make sure that the development process is clear, predictable, and as efficient as possible. The charge to the Department's Development Applications and Regulatory Coordination Division (DARC) is to implement the zoning regulations and work with applicants to ensure a streamlined experience. In line with this thinking, the Department is working to **revamp the development review process** to reflect the new Zoning Ordinance timeframes and to make doing business in Montgomery County more predictable. The new processes, which are being launched this Fall, will include:

- Create a specific, written schedule for each project that can allow review of the project (from date of accepted application to Planning Board hearing date) to be accomplished in 120 days, as required in the new Zoning Ordinance. The Subdivision Regulations are also being rewritten and will establish a 120 day time frame for the review of preliminary plans.
- Work to have the Development Review Committee (DRC) function as a team that solves problems. Empower Committee members to make decisions that stick, or have Agencies assign Committee members that have the authority to approve changes at DRC.
- Create a voluntary concept plan process as a service to the development community/applicants that allows plans to be reviewed at a very early stage in the process so as to identify major issues and concerns that can be addressed in a formal application so as to not slow down the review process.
- Assure that all Agencies participate in the review and approval of Certified Site Plans so that important issues such as right-of-ways dedications are worked out during this process. This will allow Record Plats to be more primarily administrative actions.
- Finally, appropriate metrics will be put in place to measure how deadlines are being met.

The overall goal is to be more proactive and responsive to applicants, shorten approval times, and strengthen oversight of land use regulations.

Another important tool that the Department is working to assess and improve is transportation modeling. The ability to accurately forecast traffic, mode share, and the need for additional transportation improvements is essential to the master planning process and serves as a guide for future growth recommendations. The Department's Functional Planning and Policy Division (FPP) is handling the **assessment of new transportation modeling tools** to look at alternative performance metrics that include the plan for Transit Corridors in the county. This will aid in the review of existing and emerging transit oriented development.

Montgomery County continues to see an influx of new residents and providing the appropriate housing stock and necessary infrastructure needed to meet the demand is always a challenge. With Council approval, the Department's Research and Special Projects Division (RSP) is coordinating with the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to conduct a two-year **study of rental housing** in the county that will assess how we can best meet the needs of residents across the income spectrum.

Finally, a major priority for the Department over the next six months is a **stronger focus on our Design Excellence Initiative** through examination of two important tools: design guidelines and Amenity Point Guidelines. Montgomery Planning is hoping to develop better, more comprehensive design guidelines that will improve the public realm. The creation of a Director's Advisory Panel on design issues which will function much like the existing Art Panel is also being considered. Finally, we will evaluate whether the guidelines on Commercial/Residential Amenity Points awarded for projects in the CR zone need to be revised.

MASTER PLANNING HIGHLIGHTS AND MAJOR PROJECTS RECAP FROM THE PAST SIX MONTHS

Approved and Adopted Zoning Ordinance

The Council's approval of the rewritten Zoning Ordinance is a major accomplishment that will benefit all future planning and development in the county. This code is easier to apply, encourages better development, enhances compatibility, promotes sustainability and supports the county's master plans. It offers a better organization of uses and zones, clearer procedures for approval and a solid foundation in modern planning and design principles. The rewritten Zoning Ordinance includes a provision requiring specific time frames for each major step of the development review process and staff is working to implement these time frames.



Additionally, in July 2014, following months of outreach on the proposed new zoning map, the Council approved a District Map Amendment to implement the new code. The new zoning code and zoning map will become effective on October 30, 2014.

Enhanced Community Outreach

The Montgomery Planning Department has used innovative community outreach efforts in all of its recent planning efforts, including the Bethesda Downtown Plan, the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan, and the Westbard Sector Plan. New ground has been broken using innovative ways to engage the public through the production of Briefing Books that summarize existing conditions in a plan area, the development of on-line visual preference surveys, unique community meetings such as early morning breakfasts to reach out to businesses and happy hours to solicit input from millennials, and new social media engagement. The goal is to involve more community members so our plans benefit from broader public awareness and feedback. Follow our main Montgomery Planning twitter feed @montgomeryplans to stay up to date on the latest planning news and projects.



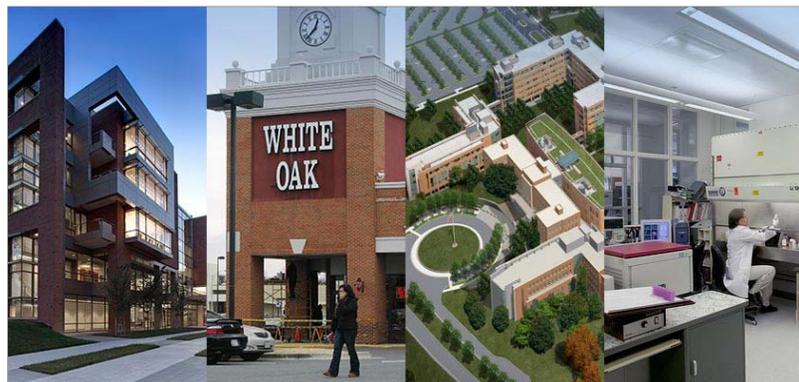
Approved and Adopted Clarksburg Master Plan Limited Amendment– Ten Mile Creek Watershed

The Clarksburg Master Plan Limited Amendment achieves the county's important goal of preserving the natural resources critical to environmental health and sustainability. It focuses on the Ten Mile Creek Watershed within the 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area. The amendment was adopted by the County Council on April 2, 2014 and the County's Environmental Guidelines are being updated to reflect its recommendations. The Council concluded that polluted storm runoff from major new development imperiled the health of Ten Mile Creek - one of the county's cleanest, most biologically robust streams. This amendment

will help to prolong the vitality of this precious resource by requiring stringent development standards and limiting impervious area.

Approved and Adopted White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan

The Montgomery County Council approved the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan on July 29, 2014 to revitalize this area in Eastern Montgomery County. In addition to focusing on mixed use development at a number of centers, the plan recommends the creation of a major new mixed use community on a 300-acre property. The plan capitalizes on the



presence of the Food and Drug Administration and the proposed relocation of Washington Adventist Hospital to this suburban center, and establishes a framework for providing more opportunities to live, work and play. It allows a mix of uses, including jobs, housing, and retail, as well as substantial open spaces and possibly a new elementary school.

The Council included a recommendation in the plan to create a White Oak Redevelopment Office (or a similar entity) that would work in coordination with the East County Regional Services Center to promote and market the area and its opportunities. The Council underscored the importance of a Bus Rapid Transit system to support the Plan's proposed development and required that the County staff explore options to finance the necessary transportation infrastructure. The Council's approval of the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan sends the message that the White Oak community is ready for sustainable growth that brings jobs, housing and vitality to this eastern portion of the County.



Review of Purple Line Mandatory Referral and Ongoing Coordination

One of the Department's major projects in the last six months was the work on the complex Purple Line Mandatory Referral. This was a huge project that required a tremendous amount of staff resources and expertise. In an effort to assure compatibility with communities and businesses along the right of way, many of the recommendations provide ways to improve station access for pedestrians and bicyclists, enhance urban design along the corridor, reduce environmental impacts, mitigate impacts to parkland and improve transitions along the Capital Crescent Trail.



An interactive map was created that highlights the recommendations in the mandatory referral and includes individual project descriptions, renderings and engineering drawings for the public to view to better understand the project. More information on the map and the mandatory referral can be found at www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation.

The Planning Department is continuing to providing technical support and coordination on an as-needed basis as part of Purple Line final design. These efforts are in addition to the transit-related recommendations in the Bethesda Downtown Plan and the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan. Development applications along or near the transportation corridor will continue to be submitted and reviewed in the context of the latest Purple Line and Capital Crescent Trail plans.

Bethesda Downtown Plan

Over the past six months, Montgomery Planning Department staff have worked with residents, property owners and other stakeholders to craft a vision and recommendations for the Bethesda Downtown Plan. This plan is exploring ways to build on the success of this area's downtown vibrant, walkable district. It also aims to create a model eco-district by addressing the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability.

An open house held in April, a community workshop in May, and an on-line visual preference survey focused on the character of the plan area. Efforts to engage millennials, who are typically underrepresented in the planning process, resulted in several happy hours at Bethesda restaurants. At these events, planning staff recruited participants for online feedback on the preliminary recommendations for the plan. The most recent happy hour, held July 16, received more than 500 RSVPs and was well attended by millennials.

Over the next six months, staff will continue to develop concepts for each downtown district, showing how each could change. These scenarios take into consideration ideas and comments from the community, including specific property owners, as well as sets forth sustainable visions for the entire downtown. They include a transportation analysis to determine impacts on walkers, transit users, bicyclists and drivers. A retail study will provide a sense of what type, locations and number of stores are likely to be competitive in the future. An online feedback loop will be launched this fall to study responses from the community on the preliminary recommendations.

Learn more about the Bethesda Downtown Plan:
www.bethesdadowntownplan.org

Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan

The Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan considers how to best design a village center while preserving the rich cultural history and rural character of the area. Mixed land uses, connections and street character, and open spaces for the community to gather are part of the plan. The plan utilized a successful four-day design workshop in February which included more than 130 residents and business owners giving their



ideas for transforming the heart of Sandy Spring. On April 3, 2014, staff presented preliminary recommendations for the Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan to the Planning Board.

After receiving positive feedback from the Planning Board, staff met with the community in the Library of the Sandy Spring Friends School on May 14, 2014, and presented the final recommendations for the Village Plan. On July 10, 2014, the Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan Staff Draft was submitted to the Planning Board.

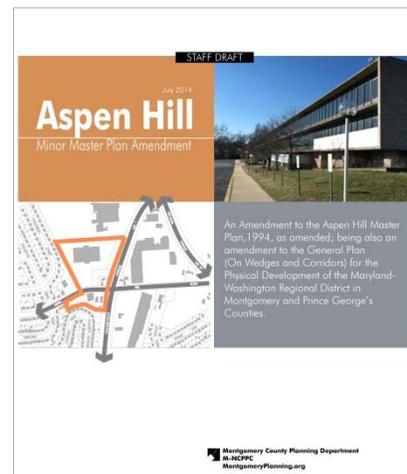


On July 17, 2014, the Plan was approved by the Planning Board as the Public Hearing Draft. The Planning Board Public Hearing was held on September 4, 2014 and work sessions will continue through October 2014. Once approved by the Planning Board in the fall, the Planning Board Draft Plan will be submitted to the County Executive and County Council for their review. Learn more about the Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan:

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/sandyspring/>

Aspen Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment

The Aspen Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment considers possible redevelopment opportunities on approximately 14 acres of land located west of the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Aspen Hill Road. Most of this site was recommended for office zoning in the 1994 Aspen Hill Master Plan. The amendment area is primarily occupied by a large office building (formerly Vitro/BAE) that has been vacant since 2010. The amendment reevaluates the area's potential within the context of a changing office market within the County and surrounding land uses and transportation networks, including the proposed Bus Rapid Transit line along Georgia Avenue.



Staff held three community meetings at the Aspen Hill Library to provide information to interested community members and garner feedback on preliminary staff recommendations. In April and June, staff briefed the Planning Board on the project status, key issues and preliminary recommendations. The Staff Draft Plan was presented to the Planning Board on July 10, 2014.

The Board approved the Staff Draft, with minor revisions, as the Public Hearing Draft Plan and this plan was presented at a public hearing on September 11, 2014. It is anticipated that the Planning Board



Draft will be transmitted to the County Executive and County Council in November 2014. Learn more about the Aspen Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment:

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/aspenhill/>



Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan

On May 6, 2014, staff reintroduced the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan to the community and completed a Briefing Book for the public. This book provides a history of this very interesting area and a comprehensive analysis of the issues being considered in the plan, from transportation networks and residential neighborhoods to natural resources and economic data. View the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan Briefing Book at

www.montgomeryplanning.org/greaterlp

The popular “Monday Matters” sessions on June 2, 9 and 16 provided residents with the opportunity to better understand how a sector plan comes together through consideration of urban design, historic preservation, land use, environment, parks and transportation systems. These evening meetings were topic specific and took place at the Coffield Center.

A community workshop held on July 15 analyzed opportunities and constraints of the sector plan area through an interactive mapping exercise. To gain more feedback on the plan, an inventive “Sunrise Series” outreach initiative was launched to engage business owners. The 6:30 a.m. meetings in July and August gave local business owners and employees the chance to interface with Planning Department staff and approximately 75 questionnaires were completed by the attendees which will be used to guide the planning process.



Another innovative engagement effort included having Planning staff participate in National Night Out, which was held on August 5 at the Coffield Center. The emphasis was to engage families in the planning process. Children and young adults participated in a “selfie wall,” snapping photos and tweeting about their impressions of Lyttonsville. Participants talked with planners, received giveaway items from local businesses and signed up for e-letters. The hashtag #greaterLP for Greater Lyttonsville Plan has been included in all outreach materials and has been a new way for the Planning Department

to engage with the community online through social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Next steps for this plan include outreach to the surrounding communities of Woodside, North Woodside, Rock Creek Forest and National Park Seminary. A visioning workshop with the community is planned for fall and a Planning Board Briefing will be held in October 2014.

View videos, presentations and photos related to the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan at www.montgomeryplanning.org/greaterlp

MASTER PLANNING EFFORTS AND INITIATIVES IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

Westbard Sector Plan

The Westbard Plan is the oldest in the County (1982) and overdue for an update. This community is situated between downtown Bethesda and the District of Columbia, and is linked to both by the Capital Crescent Trail.

In July 2014, planning staff launched the planning process, assembling existing conditions information, developing a Briefing Book to be shared with the public, and conferring with community leaders. The outreach strategy includes both face-to-face meetings and workshops, and a digital communications strategy, including an interactive website, e-newsletter, Facebook and Twitter. A dedicated telephone line will allow the non-digital community to access updates. A new online tool facilitating a “town hall” discussion will enable participation through computers and smartphones.

A kickoff meeting, held on September 23rd, was very well attended. It will be followed by an opportunities and constraints workshop and a scope-of-work presentation in October. A multi-day charrette to gain public feedback in Westbard is planned for November and will include evening sessions.

Learn more about #PlanWestbard, the process and how the community will be engaged: www.montgomeryplanning.org/planwestbard

Montgomery Village Master Plan

Following the Council's direction for expediting the Gaithersburg East/Montgomery Village Master Plan, the Planning Department recommended a smaller geographic area for planning so relevant issues could be assessed more quickly. The Council agreed with the staff's approach of dividing the Gaithersburg East/Montgomery Village Master Plan into two plans –the Montgomery Village Master Plan for the FY15 Work Program, followed by the Gaithersburg East Master Plan in the future.

The area of the Montgomery Village Master Plan generally conforms to the boundaries of the 2,435-acre planned community of Montgomery Village. The Montgomery Village Master Plan will not address the alternatives that are being considered for M-83 by the Department of Transportation and the Army Corps of Engineers, since final decisions about M-83 are unlikely to be resolved within the expedited time frame of the Montgomery Village Master Plan.



The Montgomery Village Master Plan addresses pertinent land use and zoning issues, including the Town Sector Zone, redevelopment of the former Village golf course and commercial uses at the Village Center . It will be initiated in October 2014 and the Planning Board Draft Master Plan will be delivered to the County Council one year later.

Learn more about the Montgomery Village Plan:

www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/montgomery_village

Rental Housing Study

Montgomery County continues to see an influx of new residents but finds that its housing stock has not always kept up with demand, particularly for low-cost rental dwellings. At the same time, it has become clear that some of the County's older, more affordable units, such as post-World War II-era garden apartments, are reaching a stage where they need to be rehabilitated or replaced.

As a result of these conditions, the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) are in the process of conducting a study of rental housing in Montgomery County. The project contract is managed by the Montgomery County Planning Department.

An interdepartmental project team is working closely with a consultant to devise a process that helps identify the county's rental housing needs and offers holistic and sustainable approaches to meeting them.



The study will include the following steps:

- Identify rental units that are currently without deed restrictions or other controls ensuring long-term affordability, but are nevertheless considered affordable based on monthly rents.
- Determine factors that contribute to increasing housing costs.
- Identify best practices that could be implemented to help preserve the existing affordable rental housing stock.
- Provide recommendations to increase the availability of affordable rental housing units in Montgomery County.
- Recommend potential changes to current policies and programs to help guarantee long term affordability of rental housing.

Colocation of Public Facilities Study

The Planning Department is undertaking a research study aimed at helping government agencies share key public assets to save resources and fulfill the county's broader policy goals. The recent economic downturn has been viewed in many jurisdictions as a wake-up call for the way government agencies use parks, schools, libraries, community centers and other public spaces. In addition, there is less vacant land

available for these needed facilities now that the county is largely built-out. Colocating and sharing assets, both capital and real estate, is one way to more efficiently and cost-effectively use these facilities.

Many exciting projects in the region and across the country demonstrate how the creative use of public facilities and colocation of different uses can provide the public with multiple benefits. Just as mixing commercial and residential uses is becoming the norm for new development in Montgomery County, combining uses on public land could be similarly productive and is a worthwhile issue to study.

With the aid of a consultant, the initial effort will result in a research paper focused on parks and schools that will include the following steps:

- Research colocation of public facilities and identify examples throughout the region and at a national scale.
- Identify affected stakeholders and stakeholder goals.
- Determine potential partnerships to help share resources and generate cost savings for site development.
- Identify existing publicly owned sites and look at models of colocation.
- Develop a process to prepare the colocation plan and implementation strategies.

The Planning Department will extend their original effort which looked at schools to develop information on other types of public facilities that might benefit from this shared approach, such as police and fire stations, libraries and neighborhood services centers. By expanding the approach, other important public policy goals, such as affordable housing, could also begin to be addressed. This effort will involve many different public and private sector stakeholders including the County Department of General Services (DGS), Police Department, Department of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS), Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Department of Permitting Services (DPS) and others.

Review of Transportation Modeling Tools

The Planning Department recently embarked on initiatives focused on improving our ability to forecast and evaluate traffic conditions. These efforts will provide us with the tools to support county growth management policies and more effectively develop sustainable long-range master plans.

The goals of the assessment include creating a more robust transit component of the Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR) process that reflects Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Alternative performance metrics will be developed to better evaluate transportation adequacy in existing and emerging transit-oriented developments.

Subdivision Staging (Growth Policy)

The Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP) is a set of policy tools that guide the timely delivery of public facilities (schools, transportation, water, sewer, and other infrastructure) to serve existing and future development. The Planning Board drafts this policy to establish growth and funding priorities which are then recommended to the County Council to make a final decision on a preferred approach. The Planning Board also uses the Subdivision Staging Policy to make decisions in regulatory cases and assess

transportation impacts in master plans. The next scheduled update of this policy is November 2016. The update will be kicked off in the next six months and significant work will be occurring during FY15.

Recreation Guidelines

The Planning Department is updating the existing Recreation Guidelines (adopted in 1992) to respond to current and future forms of development, particularly for those projects that propose a mix of residential and commercial uses.



The existing Recreation Guidelines give developers a menu of recreation facilities to use in the development approval process. During the review of a site plan, they guide the staff of the Planning Department and Planning Board in determining the appropriate private recreational facilities necessary to serve a residential development. The adequacy of facilities to serve a variety of age groups, from small children to seniors, is determined through a point system. These parameters, which were originally designed for low density residential developments, primarily looked at items such as multiple small play areas, tennis courts and soccer fields. Only a few urban facilities, including indoor recreation space and fitness facilities, were included.

Due to demographic shifts in the County and the need to focus on recreation space more appropriate to urban development around transit centers, the Recreation Guidelines need to be updated. Rooftop pools, community gardens, urban dog parks, pocket parks and plazas are examples of recreation facilities that could be included. In addition, the current guidelines sometimes result in facilities that provide the required points, but do not provide a truly effective recreation plan.

Updating the guidelines will provide the opportunity to rectify that situation. New standards should encourage the creation of recreational amenities that reach residents and workers; embrace context, form and materials; and expand the range of design solutions for public recreation spaces.

Regulatory Review Highlights

Applications Accepted			
	Complete Year July 1 to June 30		
	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14
Preliminary Plan - New	36	27	26
Preliminary Plan Amendments	13	17	25
Site Plan - New	19	26	16
Site Plan Amendments	48	62	63
Sketch Plan	5	0	4
Project Plan -New	6	7	1
Project Plan Amendment	2	3	1
Record Plats	204	154	161

Review Times in Days			
	Average Review Days by Plan Type by Fiscal Year		
	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14
Preliminary Plan - New	117	102	114
Site Plan - New	156	105	132

Community Outreach Efforts and Recognition

Synopsis on Sandy Spring, Bethesda Downtown, Lyttonsville, Westbard

Montgomery Planning has been introducing new outreach methods in an attempt to engage with all segments of the population during the community planning process. The mix of outreach includes traditional and new tools and includes mailings, online social media outreach, special meeting exhibits as well as videography. The difference is that the approach is more focused, collaborative and implements new technology. Successes with community outreach can be seen with the Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan, Bethesda Downtown Plan, Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan and Westbard Sector Plan. The online engagement mirrors and sustains the face-to-face outreach which helps to keep residents, business owners and the media informed and involved with the planning process.

Mindmixer

Montgomery Planning will be launching the online “townhall” meeting platform “Mindmixer” in Fall 2014. This will help to provide additional online engagement during the planning process. Staff is also preparing a visual preferences survey for the Westbard Sector Plan and an interactive map feedback exercise for the Montgomery Village Plan.

Silver Spring Placemaking Workshop Series

The Montgomery County Planning Department, in partnership with the office of County Councilmember Hans Riemer and the Silver Spring Urban District, is leading three design workshops focused on placemaking strategies for Downtown Silver Spring during Fall 2014. The series is open to the public and is meant to encourage attendees to develop a vision on ways to enhance and enliven some specific downtown locations to further improve the dynamic character of the area.



Upcoming Speakers Series with Royce Hanson

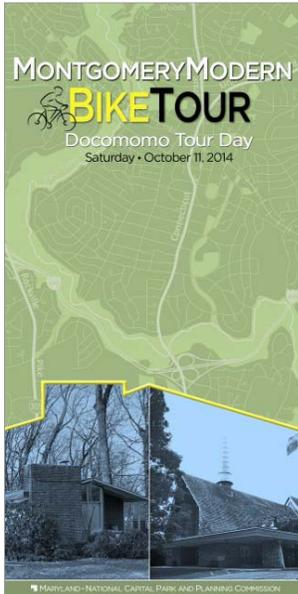
Starting in November, the Planning Department is hosting a winter speakers series focused on the history of planning in the county. The series, entitled “A Once and Future County: Lessons on How Planning Politics Shaped Montgomery County,” will be produced in partnership with former Planning Board Chair Royce Hanson. The five sessions will address relevant topics such as suburban retrofits, corridor cities and growth policies. Each



evening session will include a panel discussion with distinguished guests and a question and answer segment for attendees. Learn more about the series at www.montgomeryplanning.org/onceandfuture

Montgomery Modern Book and Bike Tour

The Historic Preservation Office has established a public education program to raise awareness of the county's post-World War II architectural heritage. An appreciation of the recent past is a special challenge for the general public since the historic context of the 1950s and 1960s is not yet widely understood. One



of these public education projects is development of a book that is tentatively titled "Montgomery Modern." This book, now being written and scheduled for publication in 2015, will present the county's mid-century modern architecture, including residential neighborhoods, custom houses, community buildings and corporate headquarters by nationally known architects and accomplished local practitioners.

A related event is a bike tour of mid-century modern neighborhoods along Rock Creek Park and nearby landmarks. The Historic Preservation Office is partnering with the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects to sponsor the tour as part of Docomomo-US National Tour Day. Docomomo, short for the documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the modern movement, is an international advocacy organization founded in 1988 by two Dutch architects.

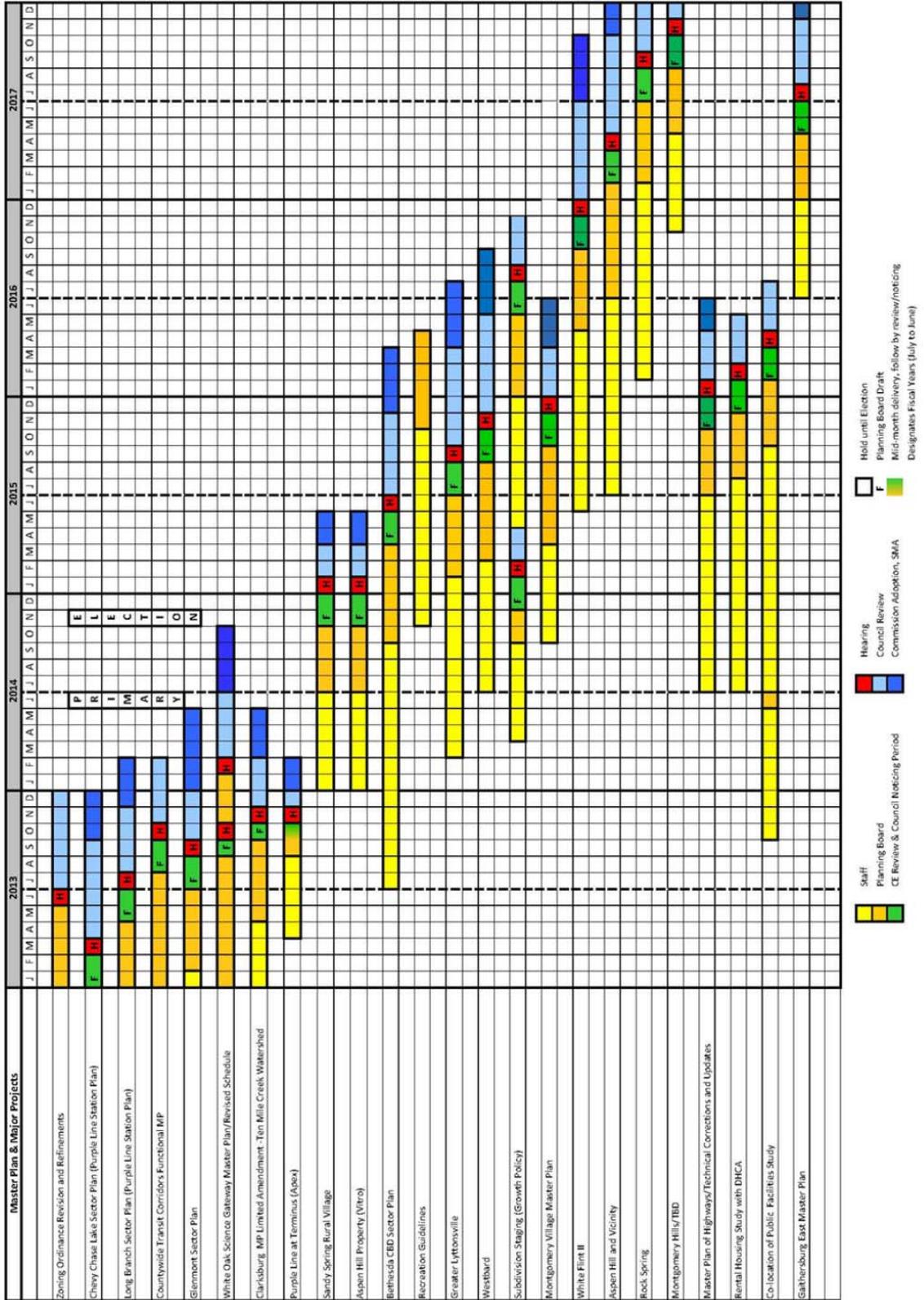
The bike tour, scheduled for October 11, 2014, builds on the popularity of last year's bus tour of Cabin John resources. It will be accompanied by an illustrated guidebook.

Social Media

Montgomery Planning has seen growth in their social media engagement over the last six months. Through strategic communications, the Planning Department (@montgomeryplans) and select planning projects have managed a strong social media presence to engage and inform the community about the latest planning news and information. For example, the @montgomeryplans twitter account has seen a 200% increase in followers since January. This is due to consistent and timely content and cross promotion with other county agencies and the media to get the word out about important Planning projects.



Master Plan and Major Projects Schedule
FY15 Adopted



Semi-Annual Report

Fall 2014



Montgomery County Department of Parks | Montgomery County Planning Department
MontgomeryParks.org | MontgomeryPlanning.org
M-NCPPC Montgomery County