
PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT

2017 PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE
(PROS) PLAN

02 MAY 2017



Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission,
Department of Parks, Montgomery County

Montgomery County Recreation Department

ABSTRACT

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| Abstract | <p>Parks, recreation, and open spaces are essential to the high quality of life for Montgomery County residents. The greatest challenge for the park and recreation system in Montgomery County is to provide facilities for a growing population where there is competition for land, while continuing to steward sensitive environmental and cultural resources.</p> <p>The <i>2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan</i> serves as the planning policy for parks and recreation in Montgomery County to the year 2030 and beyond. It assesses needs and recommends strategies for the delivery of park and recreation facilities, protection of natural resource areas, and preservation of historic/cultural areas and agricultural lands, and is required by the State of Maryland for funding by Program Open Space.</p> |

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CHAPTER 1 - Project Overview

Introduction

Parks, recreation, and open spaces are essential to the high quality of life for Montgomery County residents. The greatest challenge for the park and recreation system in Montgomery County is to provide facilities for a growing population where there is competition for land, while continuing to steward sensitive environmental and cultural resources. Over the years, Montgomery County's park system has responded to evolving needs from protecting water supply in the 1920's to hosting organized recreation on courts and fields in the 1950's, to preserving the natural environment in the 1970's, to supporting "Smart Growth" in recent decades. Parks and open spaces are needed now more than ever in the County to serve not only the leisure needs of residents and employees but to ensure a strong sense of community, while protecting open space and natural resources for future generations. Given the scarcity of available land, making sure our existing lands and facilities are utilized to their maximum potential is more critical than ever.

The *2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan* serves as the planning policy for parks and recreation in Montgomery County to the year 2030 and beyond. It assesses needs and recommends strategies for the delivery of park and recreation facilities, protection of natural resource areas, and preservation of historic/cultural areas and agricultural lands, and is required by the State of Maryland every five years to be eligible for Program Open Space funding.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the *2017 PROS Plan* is:

- To provide the basis for park and recreation recommendations in area and park master plans
- To guide priorities for park acquisition, renovation and development
- To provide guidance regarding recreation facility needs in the County for the next 10 years
- To recommend priorities for important natural and historic resources in the County that need to be preserved and interpreted
- To review policy and background information regarding local agricultural land preservation programs

The PROS Plan provides input into the State's *Land Planning, Preservation and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)*; it serves as the County's *LPPRP*. In order to keep pace with changing patterns of need, updates to the *PROS Plan* have been required by the State approximately every five years. The PROS Plan supports the park and recreation goals and objectives contained in the County's *1993 General Plan Refinement of the Goals and Objectives for Montgomery County (Appendix 1)*. It compares facility needs and resource conservation priorities for different areas of the County so that decision makers have the information necessary to establish priorities in an era of high competition for limited resources. It includes chapters on Recreation and Park Needs, Natural Resources Stewardship, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Agricultural Land Preservation.

Public Outreach

During the development of the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* in 2010, the Department of Parks and the Montgomery County Recreation Department pledged to “engage a diverse community and proactively respond to changing demographics, needs, and trends”. Accordingly, for the *2017 PROS Plan*, a great deal of input was collected through a variety of methods including the Parks and Recreation of the Future campaign and surveys, interviews and focus groups conducted by a team of consultants.

Montgomery County demographic trends that influenced the outreach methods for the *2017 PROS Plan* include:

- Increasing racial and ethnic diversity, with a projected growth in minority groups from 55 percent of the population in 2015 to 68 percent of the population in 2040
- Projected growth in the population people over age 65 from 12 percent of the population in 2010 to 20 percent in 2040
- A large and widely diverse foreign-born population speaking a multitude of languages and varying English speaking proficiencies (see *CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation*)

PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE FUTURE CAMPAIGN

Montgomery Parks launched a multi-pronged outreach strategy in November 2016 to engage diverse communities for input about the future of parks and recreation. The initiative, titled *Parks and Recreation of the Future*, was aimed at soliciting public input to inform three separate but related park programs: the *2017 Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan*, the *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan*, and the *Capital Improvement Program*.

The outreach strategy succeeded in soliciting ideas from nearly 3,000 Montgomery County residents. Over 950 people were reached through face-to-face community meetings, focus groups, and interviews. More than 1,000 comments were received via an online survey and interactive maps. Our statistically valid survey had 705 respondents. The outreach efforts targeted a vast array of audiences including, but not limited to ethnically diverse communities, senior populations and people with disabilities.

A variety of channels and tactics were leveraged to reach these audiences including:

Traditional outreach methods:

- Public and community meeting presentations to regional and citizen advisory boards,
- Email outreach to elected officials, Home owner and Civic Associations,
- Posters and flyers distributed at frequented locations such as recreation centers, park facilities and libraries

CHAPTER 1 - Project Overview

Media outreach:

- A segment on WRC-TV News Channel 4 (NBC affiliate for the DC market)
- Interviews on County Cable TV programs Que Pasa and County Report This Week, and Radio program Montgomery Al Día, and WHAG
- Outreach to regional and ethnic outlets including TV affiliates, Washington Post, Bethesda Beat, Olney Greater News, Germantown Pulse, MYMCMedia, WTOP, WAMU, El Pregonero, Univision
- Media advertising: El Tiempo Latino, Radio One, Radio America, The Beacon
- Social media and marketing outreach via Facebook and Twitter posts and Facebook advertising
- A new online open town hall platform (Peak Democracy) for people to easily submit their comments and suggestions and respond to a survey
- Face-to-Face Outreach: via a listening tour in which parks staff presented the details of the campaign among various organizations and groups such as:
 - Office of Community Partnership Advisory Boards
 - Commission on the People with Disabilities
 - Age-Friendly Montgomery Advisory Group
 - Citizen Advisory Boards
- Needs Assessment by consultants
 - Statistically valid survey
 - Key stakeholder focus groups and interviews
 - Intercept surveys targeting diverse audiences conducted at community locations

NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, Montgomery Parks contracted PROS Consulting and their sub-consultants, Communities Connect Consulting and ETC Institute, to complete a Needs Assessment to solicit comprehensive feedback from residents of the community. The process engaged a broad range of demographic segments present within Montgomery County to better understand the characteristics, preferences, and satisfaction levels of residents in relation to parks and recreation activities.

Once a thorough understanding of residents served was established, a variety of data sources and best practice standards was applied to quantify and prioritize community needs for parks and recreation services and amenities in Montgomery County. This Needs Assessment consisted of six community input methods and an analysis of priorities and highlighted the major findings and recurring themes. Ultimately, these key findings and themes laid the framework of the needs, interests, and preferences of residents served by Montgomery County Parks. These key findings were then aggregated into Priority Rankings.

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Statistically Valid Survey

ETC Institute administered a statistically valid needs assessment survey for Montgomery County. This survey was mailed to a random sample of households within Montgomery County. A total of 705 households completing the survey. Overall, 20% of those surveyed indicated that English was not their primary language. A total of 21 different languages were represented in the survey, with Spanish and Chinese the two highest non-English languages noted amongst respondents. The overall results indicated that 95% of respondents communicated that high-quality parks, trails, recreation facilities and services are either very important (82%) or somewhat important (13%) to the quality of life in Montgomery County.

Key Stakeholder Focus Groups and Interviews

Communities Connect Consulting conducted an extensive public engagement outreach effort, focused on minority communities. Over a period of four weeks, six focus groups consisting of 61 total participants were conducted with an experienced facilitator, a native language interpreter, and a research analyst to record notes. These focus groups were open to individuals who live in the selected specific minority population areas. The group was evenly distributed in terms of race/ethnicity, with 30% African American, African, or Black; 33% Hispanic and/or Latino; and 37% as Asian or Pacific Islander. Participants resided in 16 different zip codes, and ranged from recent arrivals to residents living in the U.S. between 5-10 years. Of participants, 58% were female and 42% were male. Throughout the process, all ideas from the public were carefully documented, and used to summarize the development of the outreach plan to the minority communities.

Intercept Surveys

The PROS Consulting team collected survey information from residents and system users via intercept survey method. The purpose of these surveys was to help develop a better understanding of the needs, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Montgomery County residents in relation to parks, natural resources, and recreation activities. Surveys were collected at community recreation centers, local grocery stores, churches, and parks. To help ensure collection from a representative cross-section of County residents, Mandarin, Spanish, and Hindi translators we also present assisting the PROS Team throughout this process. A total of 174 responses were collected throughout this method. Respondents' language of preference included 49% English, 10% Spanish, 25% Mandarin, and 16% Hindi.

Plan Highlights

PLAN GUIDANCE

National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), has as its core mission to impact communities through three pillars of Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity (<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/>).

These overarching themes are important in guiding the priorities of Montgomery Parks and the Recreation Department, as described in more detail in Chapter 2.

Previous Plans

Several plans and policies have guided the formation of the *2017 PROS Plan* including the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation (Vision 2030)*, completed in June 2011, and the *2012 PROS Plan*. Building on these plans, the *2017 PROS Plan* includes updated service delivery strategies for several priority facilities and resources. The strategies will guide the Department of Parks and the Recreation Department in locating the right park and recreation facilities in the right places, and to ultimately help ensure that the parks and recreation system continues to play a major role in shaping Montgomery County's high quality of life.

Needs Assessment Report

Overall, Montgomery County residents report a high degree of satisfaction with the parks and recreation facilities and programs, which are considered by 82% of respondents of the statistically valid survey (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*) to be important to the quality of life in the County. Seventy percent of respondents are satisfied with the overall value their household receives from the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department. One out of four respondents (25%) indicated they are very proud of M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks recreation facilities, parks, and services, and 42% indicated they are proud.

Three major themes emerged from the extensive outreach and analysis for guiding the park and recreation facilities and services for Montgomery County into the future:

- Build Community Through Parks - Provide spaces and programs that bring people together
- Plan for Future Generations - Increase land for natural resource protection and conservation
- Optimize What We have - Utilize existing park and recreation facilities and lands more fully

BUILD COMMUNITY THROUGH PARKS AND RECREATION

Serving the residents of the County has always been a goal of Montgomery Parks and the Recreation Department. One of the values of Montgomery Parks is to “support and embrace cultural differences and offer suitable programs, activities, and services.” The mission of the Recreation Department is to

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“provide high quality, diverse, and accessible programs, services, and facilities that enhance the quality of life for all ages, cultures, and abilities.” With better methods for outreach, we were able to hear from traditionally underrepresented populations such as individuals with disabilities, foreign-born residents, and older adults. The importance of social gathering spaces and events, and promoting equitable access to parks and recreation for all populations was a strong theme throughout the Needs Assessment. Specific tactics to support this strategic priority include:

- **Provide Gathering Spaces**
 - Emphasis on benches and picnic shelters as a place for people to meet and groups to gather.
 - Large picnic shelters for long-term rentals (1/2 day or longer) and bathroom facilities nearby.
 - Flexible adjacent lawn areas for large gatherings and pick-up sports.
- **Create Culturally-relevant Programs and Events**
 - Program offerings that relate to diverse demographics of the area.
 - Historic and cultural events that demonstrate and relate history of the amenity or area.
 - Large-scale festivals and music events.
- **Diverse community engagement and native language outreach**
 - Use of email blasts, consistent website updates, and social media outreach.
 - Outreach to diverse communities through native language and in partnership with culturally-focused organizations.
 - Proactive outreach and communication with underserved communities.

PLAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Increase land for natural resource protection and conservation

Montgomery County has historically emphasized the need to manage land toward natural resources protection and conservation, and the community has been supportive and encouraging of such efforts. The recent community outreach as part of the Community Needs Assessment showed that this theme is important. The importance of land, programs, and amenities based upon the natural environment was a strong theme throughout the Needs Assessment. Specific tactics to support this strategic priority include:

- **Priority Rankings - Priorities identified using the quantitative and qualitative input from all of the community needs input methods included:**
 - An emphasis on natural trails, natural space and wildlife habitat, and gardens, indicating that the community values the opportunity to preserve enjoy these amenities.
 - Nature parks over traditional sports parks
 - Opportunities for nature recreation, including contemplative and active educational and adventure elements.
 - Nature playgrounds, dog parks, and connections to natural trails and other natural/cultural amenities.
 - Preservation of current open space, greenspace and existing urban parks.

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OPTIMIZE WHAT WE HAVE

In a County where developable or re-developable land is scarce and expensive, it is more important now than ever to make sure our existing lands and facilities are utilized to their maximum potential, and if not, to renovate and repurpose them to best meet needs. This theme was strongly expressed by respondents of the statistically valid survey as well as participants in other outreach venues. Repairing and renovating existing park facilities was considered a funding priority by 49% of the survey respondents, followed by purchasing land for natural resource protection and conservation for future generations (45%) (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*). This theme was a major recommendation in *Vision 2030* from 2011 as well. The Department of Parks has responded over the past six years in several ways. The importance of programming, repurposing, and renovating parks to achieve their maximum potential was a strong theme throughout the Needs Assessment. Specific tactics to support this strategic priority include:

- Enhance Cleanliness, Security, & Accessibility
 - Enhance cleanliness of parks, especially restrooms.
 - Maintenance of existing facilities, including repair or renovation.
 - Add security, including lights or staff/personnel.
- Accessibility by public transportation, pedestrian-friendly traffic elements, and connectivity to sidewalks, trails.
 - Emphasis on multi-use trails.
- Programs and Amenities for Small Children
 - Organized activities for small children and families.
 - Playgrounds and accessible outdoor play amenities for children.

Park and Recreation Trends

Trends in Parks and Recreation across the United States, as presented at the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA) conference in April, 2017 by GreenPlay, LLC, are important to inform our future priorities. Key observations from the presentation are that we need to plan for Baby Boomers (over 50) who will make up over 50% of the national population by 2021, while responding to the Millennials (18-34), who consider wellness to be a daily pursuit, as well as the Generation Z (up to 18), who are the most tech-driven generation and spend more time indoors and online, and half of whom are ethnically diverse. Getting outdoors is considered a way to prevent illness, and team sports participation is declining, while walking, hiking and running are greatly increasing. Programming in parks and recreation is focused on events and fitness programs, more than on organized team sports programs. Additional trends in lifestyle, such as the evolution of employment toward more flexible hours and work places, and a focus on creating livable, healthy, environmentally resilient communities all should play a role in the priorities of park and recreation agencies. Specific observations from the presentation include:

- Parks and recreation are part of the public health realm – individual, community, and social health

CHAPTER 1 - Project Overview

- Back to nature initiatives are popular
- The parks and recreation industry should develop solutions for an aging population
- Walkability and connectivity are increasingly important
- Ethnic and cultural differences should influence what the industry provides

Summary of Plan Recommendations

Each of the *2017 PROS Plan* chapters contains information on current policies and background, status of what has been accomplished since the *2012 PROS Plan*, and recommendations for the future. The following is a summary of the recommendations for the future from each chapter.

CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation, includes the following new recommendations that will guide staff and decision-makers:

- Add to the Policy for Parks, a policy to Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, or Compensate, to guide any public or quasi-public agency seeking to use parkland for non-park projects
- Two new urban park types in the Park Classification System, to respond to a need for smaller “pocket greens” and “plazas”
- Fill gaps in service in areas of higher concentrations of lower income households with low walkable access to park entrances and trailheads (Park Equity Analysis)
- Provide quality services and park and recreation programs that are inclusive and accessible to patrons (Guidance for Accessibility and Non-Discrimination in Facilities and Services)
- Continue to Balance Renovation, Development and Acquisition, to better serve the park and recreation needs of the citizens of Montgomery County.

CHAPTER 3 - Optimizing Growth with Urban Parks, recommends new strategies for maximizing the use of public spaces in our more populated areas, including:

- A methodology to identify where parks are most needed in areas of higher population density, systematically applied across the County to promote equity in parks and open spaces
- A Park Activation program, across all areas of the County to “get people into the parks,” with a vision for all Montgomery County residents to choose park activities during their leisure time, and to ultimately promote self-directed activation of parks. Programs and activities will be developed for four seasons to promote park use year-round.

CHAPTER 1 - Project Overview

CHAPTER 4 - Recreation and Parks contains the estimated facility needs to the year 2030. Besides estimating future needs and recommending service delivery strategies for several facilities, the chapter recommends the following to be accomplished in the next five years:

- Build priority trail segments as identified in the Countywide Park Trails Plan for natural and hard surface trails
- Expand athletic field capacity through lighting, synthetic turf, conversions, developer-provided rectangles, and improved design and construction of public school fields
- Accommodate year-round field sports participation trends by eliminating overlay fields when demand for one sport decreases to a point where a small number of remaining users can be relocated to other fields
- Select a site for a group picnic area in Rock Creek Regional Park
- Complete a Nature Centers Functional Plan with an objective and data-based analysis to determine if and where any new nature centers or renovations should be constructed in the park system
- Determine where there are underutilized sports courts for potential conversion to skate parks, dog parks, or futsal courts
- Select a pilot site for pickleball courts by converting one tennis court to two pickleball courts
- Select a site for a purpose-built, adult-sized cricket field in the MD Route 29 corridor

CHAPTER 5 - Natural Resources Stewardship contains recommendations to continue Montgomery Parks' strong history of stewarding natural resources in the park system and across the County, including:

- Maintain what we have in good condition as the most important stewardship step
- Target stewardship efforts to the best resources, by refining management objectives for natural resources that efficiently and actively manage resources for human impacts
- Meet resource-based recreation needs while minimizing impacts to all natural resources, by relying upon scientific data and analysis and results-oriented resource management efforts
- Expand efforts to educate citizens and staff about natural resources to reach more children and adults, through interpretive programs (e.g., environmental literacy, Children in Nature, engaging diverse communities), and staff training (e.g., water quality protection, sediment and erosion control, Integrated Pest Management)

CHAPTER 6 - Cultural Resources Stewardship provides recommendations and priorities for cultural resources that focus on public interpretation first and foremost, bringing the county's history and archaeological discoveries to life, with three main priorities to:

- Increase funding for the preservation, restoration and adaptive reuse of those sites deemed the highest priority on the Cultural Resources Asset Inventory

CHAPTER 1 - Project Overview

- Expand educational opportunities at the parks through historical and archaeological programs with interactive and innovative exhibits
- Select the best sites to create museums or become premier cultural destinations within the parks.

CHAPTER 7 - Agricultural Land Preservation contains recommendations that help to keep the highly successful agricultural preservation programs in Montgomery County moving forward into the next decade:

- Explore alternative sources to fund agricultural easement programs, including new public funding mechanisms and tools to incentivize private sector purchase of easements.
- Implement the New Farmer Project to promote the creation of new sustainable-practice farm businesses using mentoring, business training, and an innovative approach to pairing start-ups with landowners to speed the start-up process.

CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation

This Chapter includes background and policies that guide the *2017 PROS Plan* including the Three Pillars of the National Recreation and Parks Association, the Parks and Recreation departments' missions, visions and values, policies for parks to better deliver park and recreation services to county residents, population trends, data on the parks and recreation system in Montgomery County, a revised Park Classification System and Implementation of Mission, Vision, and Values.

About Montgomery Parks and Recreation

Montgomery Parks is one department within the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), a bi-county agency created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority covers most of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, excluding many large municipalities such as Rockville and Gaithersburg.

The Commission's planning jurisdiction the Maryland Washington jurisdiction, Maryland-Regional District, comprises 908 square miles; its parks jurisdiction, the Metropolitan District, comprises 75 square miles.

The Commission has three major functions:

- The preparation, adoption, and from time to time, amendment or extension of the *1964 General Plan "... on Wedges and Corridors"* for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.
- The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system.
- In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire County public recreation program.

The Commission functions as one agency, involving a unique relationship between The Planning Department and The Department of Parks and governed by a bipartisan Board.

THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan guides macro-level land use and development in the County. For the past 50+ years, the plan has served as the foundation of general planning. The General Plan recommended the renown "Wedges and Corridors" concept which refers to a pattern of regional land use in which growth is channeled into development corridors such as I-270, Wisconsin Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, Georgia Avenue, New Hampshire Avenue and US 29 while between these corridors wedges of open space and farmland are preserved while accommodating lower density development.

Until the 1990s, these wedges have experienced the largest growth in parkland acreage in Montgomery County. These wedges include nearly all the county's stream valley parks, as well as most of the regional and recreational parks, and conservation parks. Local parks, neighborhood parks and urban parks have complemented development in the corridors, to meet the growing demand for active recreational facilities such as playground, ball courts and ballfields.

CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation

The county is now mature and there are not many large tracts of land available for large-scale development in the corridors, therefore, the county is now focusing on improving park and recreation service in areas experiencing the highest growth, and those areas tend to be in transit-serving urban nodes along Metro's red line (and in the future, the Purple Line corridor). The challenge is the competition for land at these nodes, where the cost of land is high. Consequently, the county increasingly is looking to developers to provide urban parks as part of higher density development, to keep pace with the large increases in population in these urbanizing areas.

Periodically the General Plan is updated and amended. The *1993 General Plan Refinement* is the most recent. It does not replace the *1964 General Plan* but reaffirms the emphasis of the Wedges and Corridors concepts and replaces guidelines that were expressed in a *1969 General Plan Update*.

Land use planning at the community level is guided by Area Master Plans and Sector Plans, each of which has amended the General Plan. In addition, the General Plan is amended by Functional Plans that are adopted by the County Council.

MONTGOMERY PARKS VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

VISION

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

MISSION

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

VALUES

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

MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Mission

The mission of the Montgomery County Recreation Department is to provide high quality, diverse, and accessible programs, services, and facilities that enhance the quality of life for all ages, cultures, and abilities.

Operating Principles: In support of the mission, the Department will readily serve the community by providing:

- Leisure activities that enhance skills, health, and self-esteem
- Activities that incorporate current leisure trends and population demographics
- Ways to stimulate growth in knowledge through leisure experiences
- Opportunities to build sense of community
- A network of services linking the community through collaboration and partnerships
- Safe havens where participants feel welcome
- Fun for all

Operating Objectives: The Department will continuously strive for optimal participant experiences.

- **Teamwork:** Essential to achieve success for our staff, our programs, our families, and our community
- **Objectivity:** We will maintain a positive approach to all challenges we face
- **Growth:** Change will be embraced, and used to expand our opportunities
- **Imagination:** We will cultivate new ideas into exciting programs and services
- **Value:** We will understand and appreciate the wealth of diversity of our community
- **Excellence:** We will meet our participants' expectations of quality and performance

Policies

Overarching policies that guide the provision of facilities and services in the Department of Parks include the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, and "A Policy for Parks". This PROS Plan recommends an additional policy called "Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, Compensate".

VISION 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

The following strategies were developed based on input from community leaders and stakeholders who participated in a Vision 2030 Summit in February 2010. These strategies helped guide the proposals in the *2012* and *2017 PROS Plan*.

The M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department serve the County to:

CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation

- Promote healthy living through diverse recreation and leisure activities
- Protect natural, historical, and archaeological resources
- Promote economic competitiveness of Montgomery County as a place for businesses to locate through a robust parks and recreation system that attracts knowledge workers and families
- Promote a sense of community and civic pride
- Nurture an appreciation for our natural, cultural legacy
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities
- Shape healthy, safe, green communities
- Collaborate with partners to provide sustainable, accessible, and diverse leisure opportunities
- Engage a diverse community and proactively respond to changing demographics, needs, and trends
- Acquire, maintain, and manage the parks and recreation built environment

“A POLICY FOR PARKS”

The following *Policy for Parks* was adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board in the *1988 PROS Plan* and has been re-affirmed and included in every PROS Plan since that date. Its goals and objectives are still valid and should be followed whenever possible. Exceptions may be made by the Planning Board when it is deemed to be in the best public interest. The *Policy for Parks* guides acquisition, development, and management of the Montgomery County Park System. It is listed in its entirety below, with the addition of a proposed section on public or quasi-public agencies seeking to use parkland for non-park projects:

Goal

To acquire and maintain a system of natural areas, open spaces, and recreation facilities developed in harmony with the County’s natural resources to perpetuate an environment fit for life and fit for living.

Objectives

Acquisition of Parkland

The objectives of the program for parkland acquisition shall be:

- Acquisition of land for a balanced park system in the region in order to:
- Provide citizens with a wide choice of both active and passive recreation opportunities as major factors in enhancing the quality of Life
- Provide adequate parklands to accommodate conservation and preservation needs
- Acquisition of parkland based on the following considerations:
- Local and regional demand for public park and recreation facilities based on current need and projected population changes

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- Protection and preservation of natural areas
- Protection and preservation of watersheds
- Protection and preservation of cultural and historical sites
- Encouraging the private dedication of land as a means of parkland acquisition.

Development and Management of the Park System

The objectives of the planning, design, construction, and management of the park system shall be based on:

- Meeting the needs of recreation and preservation in a manner that is harmonious with the natural beauty and parkland physiography, reflecting concern for the environment
- A planned and scientific approach to resource management, cognizant of the ecological interdependencies of people, the biota, water and soil

In order to preserve natural resources, the Department of Parks shall:

- Limit the development of active-use areas in regional parks to no more than 1/3 of their total park acreage, with the remaining acreage designated as natural areas and/or conservation areas. Development in other categories of parks shall be determined on a case-by-case basis with full consideration of the values of the natural features
- Prepare an environmental evaluation as part of park development or rehabilitation plans were deemed appropriate by the Park Commission
- Review as necessary the impact of park use, development, and management practices on parkland

Relationship to Other Public Agencies, Education and the Private Sector

- The Department of Parks shall encourage other public agencies, as well as the private sector, to assist in providing compatible open spaces, natural areas, and recreation facilities and opportunities in the region
- The Department of Parks shall encourage and support research in the environmental sciences by other public agencies, institutions of higher learning, and the private sector, and support programs in outdoor education and recreation in the school system
- Lands and facilities under the control of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission are held as a public trust for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations. The Commission is pledged to protect these holdings from encroachment that would threaten their use as parkland. The Commission recognizes that under rare circumstances non-park uses may be required on park property in order to serve the greater public interest
- For projects that will impact parkland, the policy is that non-parkland alternatives be pursued first for all publicly funded projects – unless environmental, economic, social and engineering impacts to move the project off parkland are proven to be prohibitive. In cases where the

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Planning Board has deemed that non-park use of parkland is unavoidable and/or serves the greater public interest, The Department of Parks shall:

- Require the agency acquire a Park Construction Permit. Through the review process Parks will require that the agency minimize the impacts to parkland as much as possible
- Determine how to make the park system whole through mitigation. Some examples of mitigation may include but are not limited to; reforestation, vegetation enhancements or replacements, tree replacement, impervious surface removal, stormwater management facility retrofit or creation, terrestrial or aquatic habitat restoration, or other measures deemed appropriate for the impact.
- In instances where the agency must permanently take ownership of parkland, parkland replacement may be required. Parkland impacted by a project must be replaced at equal or greater natural, cultural, and/or recreational value and therefore the parkland replacement mitigation may exceed the acreage impacted by the project. In certain instances, the impacts to parkland caused by public projects may be of such magnitude that the park function affected can never be restored and/or The Department of Parks believes there is no comparable replacement land in the County. When such cases arise, a compensation plan will be developed and agreed upon
- Neither Mitigation, nor Compensation will be considered in place of avoidance, minimization or mitigation and will need to be approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Population and Facilities

MONTGOMERY COUNTY POPULATION TRENDS

The changing character of Montgomery County's residents is now more notable than the anticipated slower growth typical of a populous and developed county. Major demographic trends shaping the County's growth and change such as increasing racial and ethnic diversity and the inevitable aging of baby boomer residents are highlighted below.

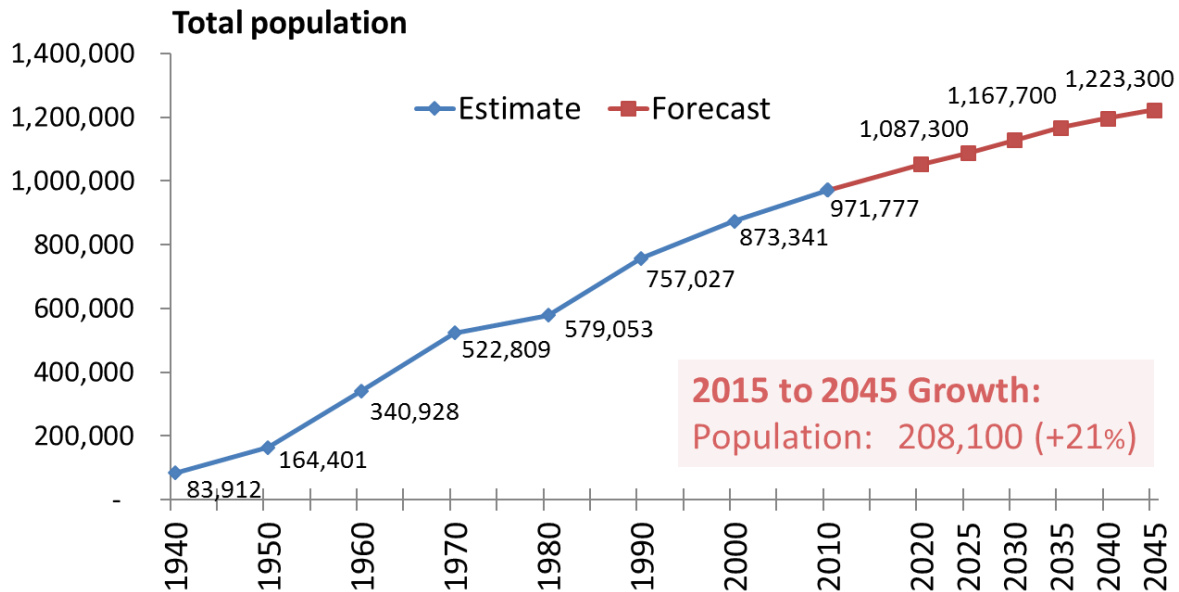
- Increasing racial and ethnic diversity in Montgomery County is expected to continue, assuming sustained migration patterns of racially and ethnically diverse populations moving into the County and additional minority births.
- Montgomery County gained "majority minority" status in 2010 when the percent share of the County's previously largest racial group, non-Hispanic whites, dropped below half. The County's minority groups are projected to steadily increase from 55 percent in 2015 to 68 percent of the population in 2040.
- The aging baby boomers—the leading edge turned 65 in 2011— are forecasted to double the number of the County's 65-plus population in 2010 from 120,000 residents to 244,000 by 2040, an increase from 12 percent of the population to 20 percent.
- Montgomery County has a large and widely diverse foreign-born population speaking a multitude of languages and varying English speaking proficiencies. One third of the county's residents are foreign-born, the highest concentration in the Washington, D.C. region.
- Montgomery County retains its ranking among the wealthiest counties in the nation, while its median income varies by subpopulations such as race and Hispanic origin.
- Over the decades, Montgomery County evolved from predominately married-couples with children to a broader mix of household types including single parents, couples with no children under 18, single, and unrelated people living together.

Slower Growth of a Mature, Developed County

With over one million people, Montgomery County settled into a slower growth phase as dwindling supplies of developable land and transportation capacity no longer sustained rapid growth. Forecasts of Montgomery County's population, households and employment are prepared by the Research and Special Projects staff of the Montgomery Planning Department participating in a regional cooperative process organized by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (*Figure 1- Forecasted Population Gains Taper Off*). The County's annual growth rate of 1 percent is projected to slow even further over the next 30 years. Population is forecasted to grow from just over 1 million people in 2015 to 1.2 million by 2045. This is an increase of about 208,000 people, or 21% gain over 30 years. In the near term, the County is forecasted to gain 72,000 people at a rate of 20 people per day to reach 1,087,000 people in 2025.

The key drivers of the County's growth, international migration and births, not only add population, but more importantly, are major influencers of demographic change in addition to the inevitable aging of residents. The changing character of Montgomery County's residents is now more notable than its population growth.

Figure 1- Forecasted Population Gains Taper Off



Source: 1940-2010 Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau; Washington Council of Government Forecast Round 9.0, Research and Special Projects

Racial Diversity, Hallmark of Change

Increasing racial and ethnic diversity outpaced Montgomery County's overall population growth since the 1990s, steadily increasing the minority share of the total population --that is, everyone who is not non-Hispanic white. Between 1990 and 2015, the minority population added 366,200 people compared to gains of 283,100 in the total population or changed at a rate of 9 new minority residents for every 7 new residents (*Figure 2- Race and Hispanic Origin, 1990-2015*). Hispanics, the County's fastest growing group, gained 141,700 people, more than tripling in size over the past 25 years, while the non-Hispanic white population dropped 83,100 residents, a 15 percent loss. The minority share of the County's population increased from 28 percent in 1990 to 55 percent in 2015.

Montgomery County became a "majority minority" county in 2010. The percent share of the County's largest racial group, non-Hispanic whites, dropped below half, 49.3 percent, creating a plurality among racial and ethnic groups where no single group was a majority. Hispanics became the largest minority group in 2010 surpassing the number of African Americans in the County.

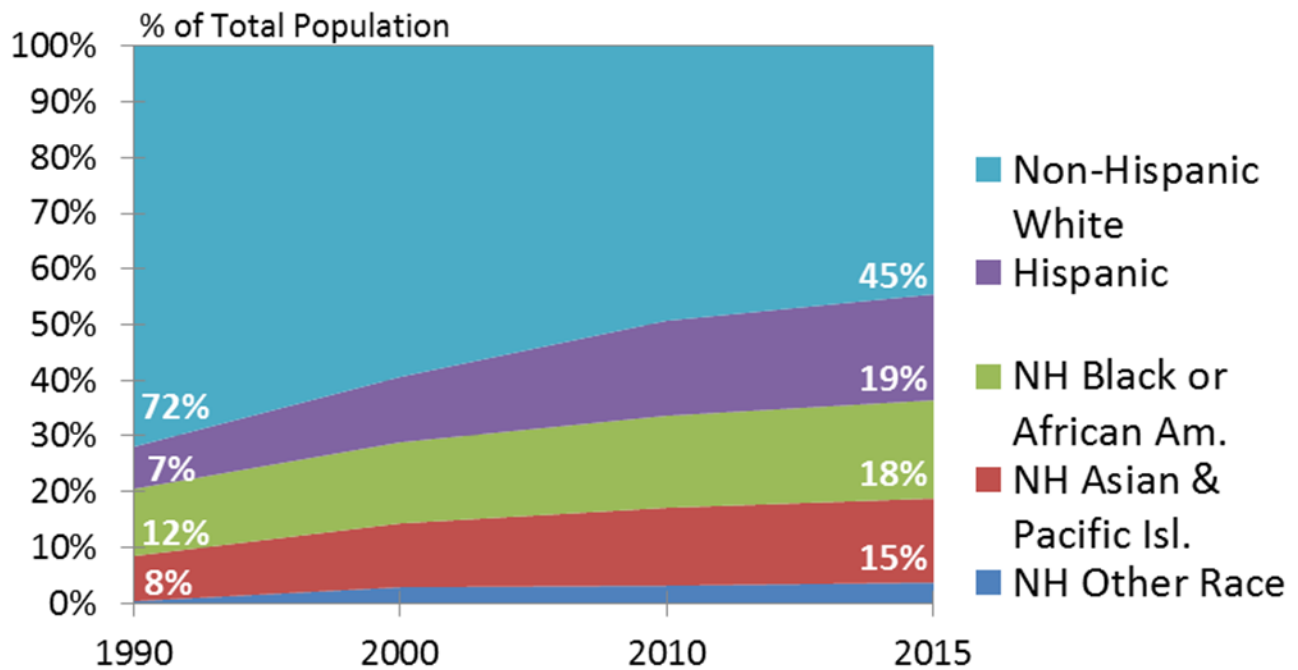
Between 2010 and 2015, the Hispanic population gained 32,000 to 197,400 people, 19 percent of the County's population. In 2015, 18 percent of the County's population was African American (182,700 people), and 15 percent Asian and Pacific Islanders (155,500 people). The non-Hispanic white population dropped 3 percent to 465,300 people, 45 percent of the population. In 2015, minorities comprised 55 percent of the total population making Montgomery County more diverse than the nation (39 percent) and Maryland (48 percent). While similar in the level of diversity compared to the Washington, D.C. region (54 percent), the County has more equal percentage distribution among the minority groups.

Near and long term trends of increasing racial and ethnic diversity in Montgomery County are expected to continue, assuming sustained migration patterns of racially and ethnically diverse populations moving

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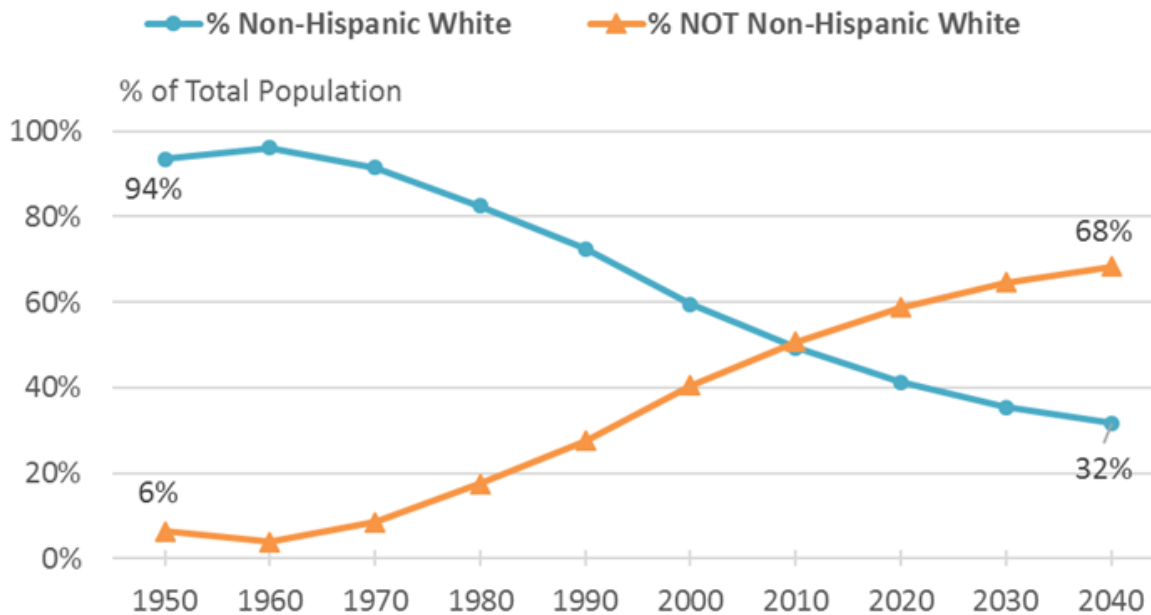
into the County and additional minority births. The Maryland Department of Planning's forecast of non-Hispanic white population projects the County's minority groups will grow by 22 percent rising from 55 percent in 2015 to 62 percent of the total population in 2025. Between 2015 and 2040, the minority population is forecasted to increase by 46 percent and make up 68 percent of the County's population (*Figure 3 -Percent of population by age group.*). Montgomery County's population gained majority minority status in 2010, more than three decades before the minority population becomes the majority across America in 2044 according to the projections by the United States Census Bureau.

Figure 2- Race and Hispanic Origin, 1990-2015



Source: 1990-2010 U.S. Census, 2015 American Community Survey

Figure 3. Historical and Forecasted Racial Change in Montgomery County, 1950-2040



Source: 1950-2010 U. S. Census; 2010-2040 Racial Forecast, Maryland Dept. of Planning

Magnet for Foreign-born

Montgomery County has a large and widely diverse foreign-born population. With one-third of the County's population foreign-born (343,200 residents) in 2015, Montgomery County ranked first in the Washington, D.C. region and fifteenth among counties nationwide in this respect. About 40 percent of Maryland's foreign-born population reside in Montgomery County.

In 2015, international movement into the County set a record net gain of 11,000 foreign immigrants after dipping during the Great Recession. With the draw of its existing large foreign-born population base, economic opportunities, and welcoming social and political environment, Montgomery County is expected to continue to attract international immigrants moderated by world and national politics and regional and global economic cycles.

The origin of Montgomery County's foreign-born residents is widely diverse with 38 percent from Asia and 36 percent arriving from Latin America in 2015. The largest immigrant group is from El Salvador, about 47,600 people making up 14 percent of the County's foreign born in 2015. The other two countries with more than 20,000 people are India, 7 percent, and China, 6.5 percent. There are not many dominant immigrant groups, rather most of the common countries of origin each comprise only 1 to 3 percent of the foreign population contributing to broad tapestry of origins.

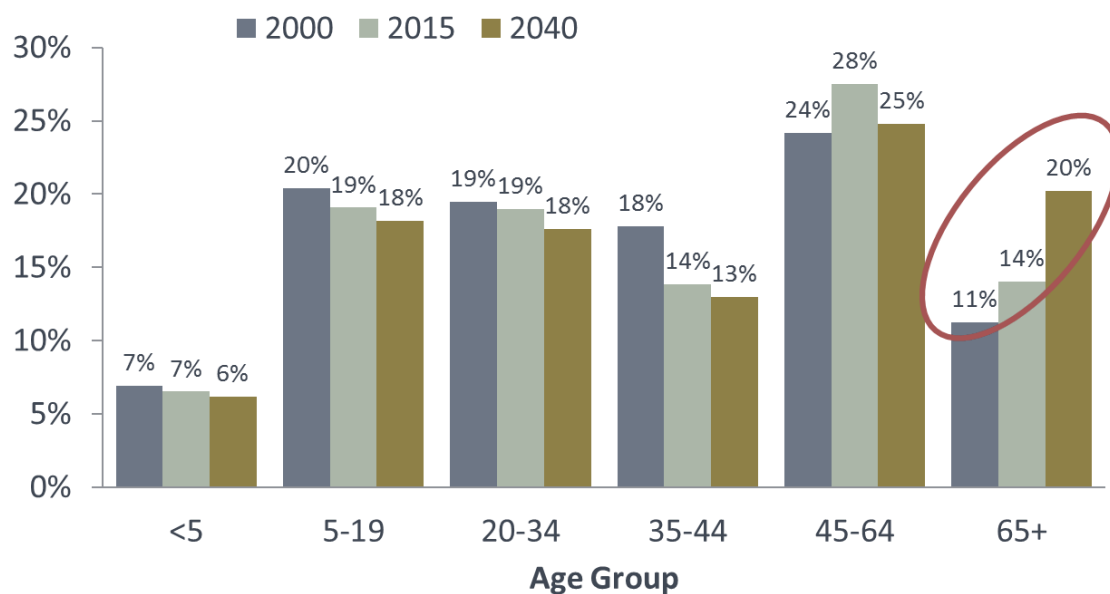
Many non-English languages, reflecting the diverse foreign places of birth, are spoken by 41 percent of the Montgomery County's residents. Spanish, spoken by 16 percent of the population, is the largest non-English language spoken at home in the County. Of the 400,000 people speaking a language other than English at home, over one-third speak English less than "very well". Of the large group of Spanish speaking residents, 44 percent characterize their English-speaking ability as less than "very well".

CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation**Aging Baby Boomers**

In 2015, almost one-quarter of a million children under age 18 live in Montgomery County, about 24 percent of the population. There are equal numbers of young adults age 20 to 34 and adults 35-44, about 198,000 people or 19 percent of residents. The percentage share of these age groups remained steady since 2000 while the older cohorts steadily increased as the baby boom generation, born between 1946 and 1964, aged. Between 2000 and 2015, the age cohort 45 to 64, considered “prime wage earners”, gained 70,000 people, a 35 percent increase as boomers aged. In 2015, about 1 out of 7 residents are age 65 or older. The number of seniors, 146,200 in 2015, increased by half in the last 15 years.

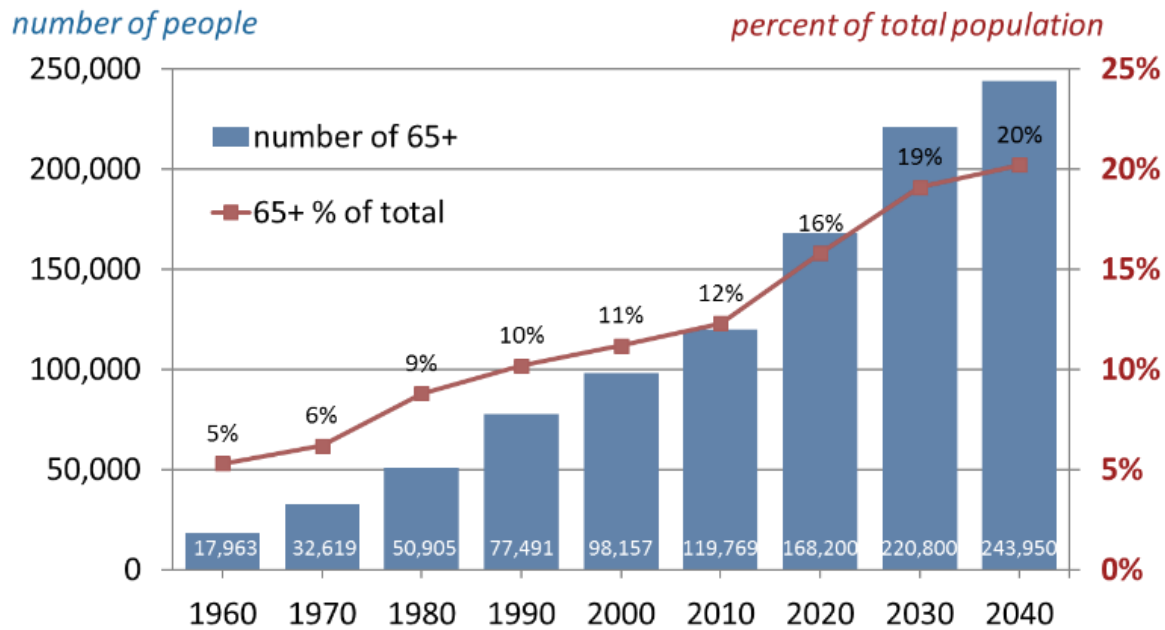
The most dramatic change in the County’s age structure is driven by the aging of the baby boomers as this group ages through life-cycle events to the brink of retirement. The leading edge of the boomer generation turned 65 in 2011 and by 2030, all will be 65 and older. The aging boomers will drive growth in the County’s 65-plus population from about 120,000 residents, or 12 percent of the population, in 2010 to 18 percent in 2030 - a 69 percentage increase over 20 years. By 2040 the number of seniors are expected to double. Not only will 1 out of 5 residents be 65 or older in 2040, the diminishing cohort of boomers will be frail elderly, ages 76 to 94 years old.

Figure 3 -Percent of population by age group.



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Decennial Census (April estimate); 2015 Annual July Estimate of Populations; Maryland Dept. of Planning Age Forecast (July 2014).

Figure 4 - Growing Senior Population as Boomers Age.



Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 1960-2010; Maryland Department of Planning Population Forecast (July 2014).

Household Income

Montgomery County retains a place among the wealthiest counties in the nation, despite its median income not fully recovering from the 2007 recession. The median household income in Montgomery County—the income at which half the households are above and half are below — adjusted for inflation, dropped 5.8 percent (-\$6,063) from its peak in 2007 to \$98,917 in 2015. Although slow to recover, the County’s 2015 median income is 6 percent above Maryland’s at \$93,294, and 77 percent above the national median of \$55,775. Montgomery County, ranked 15th nationally, is one of the seven counties in the Washington, D.C. area rounding out the top 15 list of median household income across the nation.

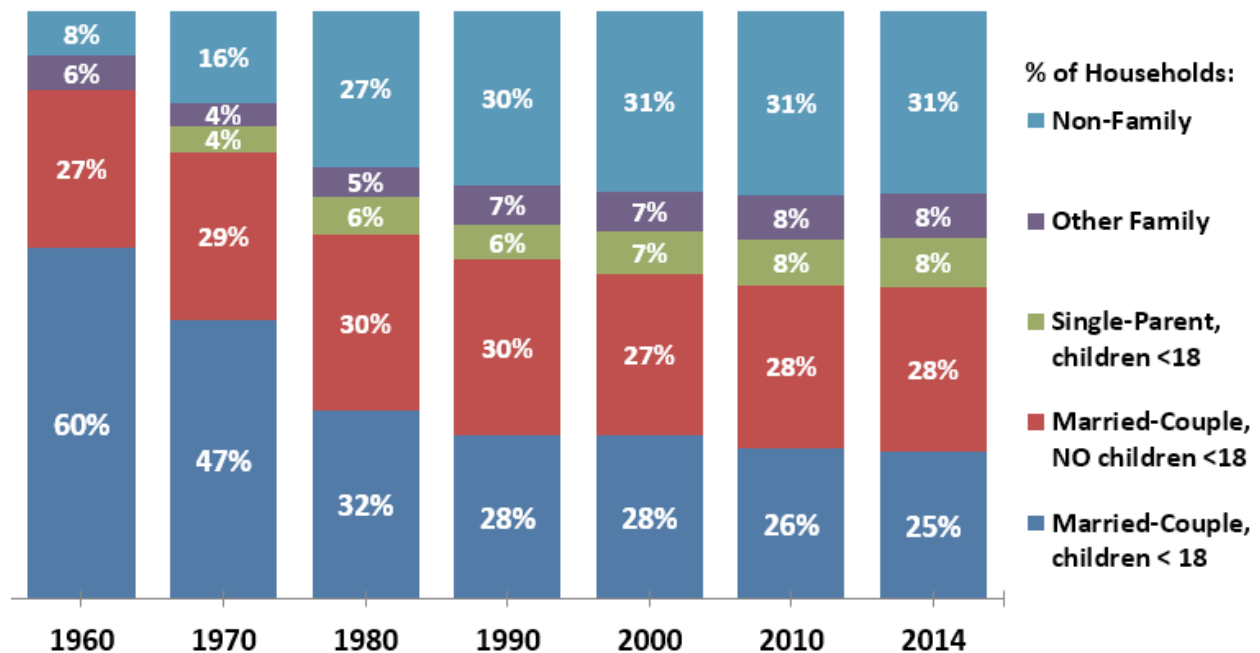
Median income in Montgomery County varies by race and Hispanic origin. Non-Hispanic white households have the highest median among the groups at \$122,191, 24 percent above the countywide median, followed by Asian households at \$105,487, 7 percent above. In 2015, 60 percent of non-Hispanic white households and 53 percent of Asian households have incomes over \$100,000. The median income of Hispanic households is \$68,126, 31 percent below the county estimated median. African American household income at \$63,862 is \$35,000, or 35 percent, below the County’s median. An estimated 36 percent of Hispanic and 39 percent of African American households have incomes less than \$50,000. Hispanic (30 percent) and African American (32 percent) households are almost half as likely to have incomes above \$100,000 than non-Hispanic whites and Asians.

In 2015, an estimated 76,855 people, or 1 in 13 residents, have income below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate in the County at 7.5 percent, is below the rates for the Washington, D.C. region, 8.3 percent, and the nation, 14.7 percent.

CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation**Evolving Household Types Outpace Married-couples with Children**

Over many decades, the types of family and non-family households in Montgomery County shifted, responding to societal changes, broader housing choices, and an aging population. The 1950s-traditional family of husband, housewife, and several children is no longer the household norm as family formation became more varied. The County's share of married-couple households with children under 18 dropped dramatically from 60 percent of all households in 1960 to 25 percent in 2014 (*Figure 9 - FY17-22 CIP by Expenditure Category*). Married-couple households with *no children under 18* (101,961) outnumbered married-couples *with* children under 18 (91,173) in 2014. Between 2000 and 2014, married-couple households with children under 18 had a negligible change of 1.3 percent, roughly 1,200 families, in contrast to married-couples with no young children growing by 14.3 percent, gaining 12,700 households.

Figure 5 - Household Types, 1960-2014



Source: 1960-2010 U.S. Census; 2014 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Aging within families explains some of this shift in married-couple households. As children become adults, parents become “empty nesters” with all of their children gone or they house “failed to launch” or “boomerang” adult children. These households, now with no children or adult children, fall into next category, married-couple, no young children, bumping up this group’s percentage share. Also, young married-couples heeding the millennial generation trend to postpone having children contribute to this group.

Coinciding with the drop in the traditional family type, comes a rise in the shares of single-parents and “other family”, both family types doubling since 1970 with each at 8 percent of the County’s population in 2014. Since 2000, the number of single-parent households with children under 18 increased by 6,900, a 29 percent jump to 30,600 families.

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In the near term, the number of married-couples with children under 18 may only slightly increase, and the percentage share of this family type will probably continue its decline begun in 2000. Aging of the baby boom generation, combined with growth in non-family households serve to limit the share of married-couple with young children, relative to the overall growth in households. Montgomery County will continue to attract new families, and married residents will continue to have babies, but not at a rate to replace baby boomer households shedding children in the next ten years. By 2025, 29 percent of the County's residents are projected to be 55 and older and living in a child-free home. The 17 percent growth in the 55 plus age cohort between 2015 and 2025 is projected to outpace the 2 percent gain in children under the 20 years old. Aging baby boomers will boost the number and the percentage share of married-couples without young children in the next ten years.

The percentage of non-family households in the County, which includes singles, young and old, and unrelated individuals living together, increased from 8 percent of all households in 1960 to 30 percent in 1990 and subsequently plateaued. This rapid increase of non-family households, jumping from 7,200 to 84,000 households from 1960 to 1990, coincided with the addition of multi-family units to the County's housing stock broadening the choice of housing, a housing type which appeals to singles and other non-family households.

In 2000, non-family households became the most common household type with over 100,000 households and 31 percent of all households. Nonfamily households capturing over one-third of all household growth between 2000 and 2014, remain the leading type gaining another 13,200, a 13 percent increase since 2000. Given that most of the new housing in the development pipeline is multi-family units for the next 10 years and the current rental housing market trend for smaller units, studios and one bedrooms, it is possible the share of non-family household types may slightly increase, and it will undoubtedly increase in number by 2025.

INVENTORY SUMMARIES

Recreation Department

Montgomery County Recreation Department's current facility inventory includes:

- 21 Community Recreation Centers, 2 closed for renovations
- 6 Senior Centers
- 13 Adult Activity Program Centers
- 4 Aquatic Centers (Indoor)
- 7 Outdoor Pools
- 12 Buildings and facilities on or immediately adjacent to parkland, through partnerships between MCRD and M-NCPPC

Department of Parks

The preservation of open space and recreation in our parks is essential to the quality of life in Montgomery County. Recreation includes both natural areas for nature walks, bird watching, hiking, mountain biking, etc., as well as those activities needing constructed facilities such as athletic fields,

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playgrounds, etc. Montgomery County currently has over 36,000 acres of parkland and 418 park and open space areas. Most of the County's park acreage is found in large countywide parks that form the framework of our park system. These include Regional and Recreational Parks, Special Parks (focusing on historic/cultural areas) and Conservation Oriented Parks (Stream Valley and Conservation Parks). County residents also have the benefit of many Community Use Parks that are closer to home and consist of neighborhood and local parks, and neighborhood conservation areas.

We recognize the importance of providing residents safe and accessible places to gather, enjoy the outdoors, and participate in healthy, recreational activities.

Our park system includes:

- 425 parks across 36,000+ acres
- 457 miles of streams
- 302 tennis courts
- 294 athletic fields
- 285 playgrounds
- 215 basketball courts
- 238 miles of paved and natural surface trails
- 134 picnic shelters
- 117 historic structures
- 102 campsites
- 28 park activity buildings

Additional facilities include nature centers, miniature trains, indoor tennis facilities, boat rental facilities, indoor and open air ice rinks, event centers, public gardens, and more.

Figure 6 - 2017 Montgomery County Park System Existing Park Acreage Summary

| (Report Number 30) | DEVELOPED | UNDEVELOPED | TOTAL PARKS | ACRES UNDEVELOPED | ACRES DEVELOPED | TOTAL ACRES |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| COUNTYWIDE PARKS | | | | | | |
| Stream Valley Park Units | 1 | 36 | 37 | 14,740.93 | 71.93 | 14,812.86 |
| Regional Park | 5 | 0 | 5 | 5,472.71 | 2,736.36 | 8,209.06 |
| Recreational Park | 8 | 3 | 11 | 408.68 | 2,527.50 | 2,936.15 |
| Conservation Park | 0 | 22 | 22 | 5,323.57 | 0.00 | 5,323.57 |
| Special Park | 20 | 6 | 26 | 1,075.60 | 1,079.6 | 2,155.20 |
| Misc. Facilities | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 110.62 | 110.62 |
| SUBTOTAL | 40 | 67 | 107 | 27,021.49 | 6,526.01 | 33,547.46 |
| COMMUNITY USE PARKS | | | | | | |
| Urban Park* | 22 | 7 | 29 | 24.10 | 23.08 | 47.20 |
| Neighborhood Park | 81 | 16 | 97 | 103.40 | 580.30 | 683.70 |
| Local Park | 135 | 17 | 152 | 354.90 | 1,937.90 | 2,292.90 |
| Neighborhood Conservation Area | 1 | 39 | 40 | 274.90 | 6.80 | 281.8 |

***Disclaimer:** By Policy Regional Parks can be only 1/3 developed, maximum. The developed acreage numbers reflect maximum development potential*

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| (Report Number 30) | DEVELOPED | UNDEVELOPED | TOTAL PARKS | ACRES UNDEVELOPED | ACRES DEVELOPED | TOTAL ACRES |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| SUBTOTAL | 239 | 79 | 318 | 757.3 | 2,548.08 | 3,305.6 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 279 | 146 | 425 | 26,316.95 | 8,949.99 | 36,853.06 |

THE PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The M-NCPPC park system is categorized into different park types for budgeting and planning purposes. The park types are based in part on the service area of each park, its physical size, natural features, and the kind of facilities it contains. This section will describe and help define the distinctions between different types of parks. The table on the M-NCPPC Montgomery County Park Classification System contains a summarized description of each type of park, including approximate park size and typical recreation facilities. - *Figure 7 - Proposed Update to the Park Type Summary Chart*

Existing Park Classification System

Montgomery County Parks are classified into two broad categories – Countywide Parks and Community Use Parks. There are several park types in each category. - *Figure 7 - Proposed Update to the Park Type Summary Chart*

Proposed Additions to the System

As detailed above and in *Figure 7 - Proposed Update to the Park Type Summary Chart*, this plan revises the Park Classification System to include two additional urban park types.

Since the adoption of the *2012 PROS Plan*, the approved six types of urban parks have been applied to numerous master and sector plans. In the process, we identified the need to expand the existing urban park types to cover a multitude of spaces that can act as public spaces. The two new types that are most needed are Pocket Greens and Plazas.

Countywide Parks

Larger parks that serve regional recreation needs or conservation needs are called County-wide Parks. Over 90% of the total County park acreage is in County-wide parks. There are six types of County-wide parks: Regional, Recreational, Special, County-wide Urban (Civic Greens, County-Wide Urban Recreational, Urban Greenways) Conservation, and Stream Valley. Of these, the regional, recreational, special park, and Countywide Urban Park categories are recreation-oriented parks, while the conservation and stream valley parks belong to a sub-category of County-wide Parks known as conservation oriented parks.

- RECREATION ORIENTED PARKS

Regional, recreational, special parks, and Countywide Urban Parks are parks serving County-wide recreation needs. They provide opportunities for active and passive recreation.

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■ REGIONAL PARKS

Regional Parks are large, typically over 200 acres, and contain a wide range of recreation opportunities and facilities, while retaining 2/3 of the park for conservation. Regional parks are the most popular of the County's parks.

Montgomery County has five developed regional parks offering a variety of recreation opportunities within a reasonable driving time of most County residents. Three of these parks serve the lower and mid-County areas. Wheaton, the System's first regional park, was opened to the public in 1961 and is easily reached by southeastern County residents. Cabin John Regional Park is accessible to southwestern County residents, and Rock Creek Regional Park by people living in the middle and upper-County areas. Many recreational facilities are provided including lighted tournament quality athletic fields, year-round tennis courts, ice rinks, trains, and a carousel. Rock Creek offers golf, boating and other water oriented recreation activities. Additionally, each of these parks furnishes other recreation opportunities, such as nature centers, playgrounds, trails, and picnic areas, and Wheaton has a large botanical garden.

The two regional parks that serve the northern area of the County have large acreage of open space and conservation area. Little Bennett has a golf course and a large campground, while Black Hill offers opportunities to enjoy picnicking, water-related recreation, and many miles of trails.

■ RECREATIONAL PARKS

This category includes parks with intensive development such as ball field and tennis court complexes at regional parks; however, they differ from regional parks in that they do not limit 2/3 of their development to conservation uses. Small picnic/playground areas are also included in this category. Presently, Montgomery County has eight such developed parks -- Olney Manor, Martin Luther King, Damascus, Fairland, Ovid Hazen Wells, Ridge Road Recreational Park, South Germantown, and Northwest Branch Recreational Park. Laytonia is under construction and should open in the Summer of 2017. There are several other undeveloped recreational parks which are planned for future development including, Muncaster, Gude and Goshen.

■ SPECIAL PARKS

These parks preserve historic or culturally significant features and have distinguishing characteristics that set them apart from other park classifications. McCrillis Gardens, Woodlawn Manor House, Rockwood Manor Park, and the Agricultural History Farm Park are good examples of special parks in the County. They are often used for small conferences, social events, specialized education, and art exhibits. Important historic sites are preserved in all types of parks. Examples of these are the Silver Spring in Acorn Urban Park, Woodlawn Manor House with its smoke house, and the Needwood Mansion.

- COUNTYWIDE URBAN PARKS

There are three types of County-wide Urban Parks: Civic Greens, County-wide Urban Recreation Areas, and Urban Civic Greens. These urban park types serve residents, visitors, and workers of an entire urban high-density transit-oriented development area, and may be programmed with numerous activities that attract residents from other parts of the County. Parking is located within structures underground or in nearby public parking lots, garages or along adjoining streets, rather than on-site. Parks may be lighted at night along major walkways and for certain activities such as events, or court sports. Subcategories include Civic Greens, Countywide Urban Recreational Parks, and Urban Greenways.

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- **CIVIC GREENS**

Civic greens are formally planned, flexible, programmable open spaces that serve as places for informal gathering, quiet contemplation, or large special event gatherings. Depending on size, they may support activities including open air markets, concerts, festivals, and special events but are not often used for programmed recreational purposes. A central lawn is often the main focus, with adjacent spaces providing complementary uses. Such uses may include gardens, water features and shade structures.

This PROS Plan recommends adding an “ideal size as follows”: recommended size: 1/2 ACRE MINIMUM, 1.5 ACRE IDEAL

- **PLAZAS**

This PROS Plan proposes a new park type called Plaza to align with and complement the Civic Green park type. Plazas will be allocated to areas with higher pedestrian traffic, usually adjacent to transit stops and commercial buildings, and with higher concentration of paved surfaces. In contrast, the Civic Greens provide a larger amount of green space area inclusive of a relevant gathering lawn area. This proposed new park type would be formally planned, predominantly hardscaped open spaces for pedestrian traffic from nearby transit stops and commercial and higher density residential uses. Depending on size, they may support activities including open air markets, concerts, festivals, and special events, but are not often used for active recreational purposes. They should be located with building entrances and at least one street facing them, and have access to sunlight and connection to the network of public spaces, and protection from the wind, traffic and noise.

- **COUNTYWIDE URBAN RECREATIONAL PARKS**

County-wide Urban Recreation areas are oriented to the recreational needs of a densely populated neighborhood and business district. They provide space for many activities. Activities may include athletic fields, playing courts, picnicking, dog parks, sitting areas and flexible grassy open space. Programming can include farmer’s markets, outdoor exercise classes, and community yard sales. There is space for a safe drop-off area and nearby accessible parking for those who cannot walk to the park.

- **URBAN GREENWAYS**

Urban greenways are linear parks that provide trails or wide landscaped walkways and bikeways and may include other recreational and natural amenities. Amenities may occur along road rights of way or “paper” streets. They may include trails, walkways and bikeways, with extra space for vegetative ground cover and trees and they should link other green spaces, trails and natural systems.

- CONSERVATION ORIENTED PARKS

There are two types of County-wide conservation oriented parks: stream valley parks and conservation area parks. Both protect important environmental areas; however, they differ in that stream valley parks are linear parks acquired to protect stream valleys and conservation parks are large natural areas acquired to preserve specific natural, archaeological or historical features. Both types of parks are managed to provide stewardship of sensitive areas, but may include trails and other low impact recreation areas when carefully designed to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate environmental impacts.

- **Stream Valley Parks** form the foundation of the park system, extending as greenways throughout the urban areas and into the countryside, putting the natural environment within

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close reach of all Montgomery County citizens. They separate communities with green open space buffers and provide easy access to nature for adjacent residents. Just as they were seventy years ago, stream valley parks today are acquired primarily for conservation purposes. They hold the key to watershed protection throughout the County by reducing flooding, sedimentation and erosion, and they furnish valuable habitat for many species of wildlife. Some stream valleys, such as the Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley, are also designated as special protection areas. These areas are so sensitive that they are subject to a special set of regulations designed to protect them.

Stream valley parks also preserve some of the County's most beautiful and interesting terrain, providing long, interconnected greenways of parkland that provide corridors for trails and wildlife. There are 30 such parks in the County, which include nearly 12,000 acres of parkland. In urban areas, clusters of active recreation facilities in parks adjacent to stream valley parks were developed many years ago to serve as local parks for nearby residents. More recent environmental regulations now limit or prevent intensive development along stream banks to reduce sedimentation and erosion and environmental degradation caused by urban runoff.

- **Conservation Area Parks** are generally large areas that preserve specific natural, archaeological or historical features; are typically located in upland areas; and are acquired specifically for environmental preservation purposes. Conservation area parks may include outstanding examples of natural communities, self-sustaining populations of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, or unique archaeological and historical resources. Given the sensitive nature of the resources in conservation parks, development is very limited and generally restricted to passive recreation areas and opportunities such as trails, fishing and picnic areas, and nature study. Opportunities for interpretation of the protected environmental, historic, and archeological elements should be maximized through self-guided nature trails, interpretive signage, and naturalist programs. There are nine conservation parks in the County, which include over 2,160 acres of parkland.

Community Use Parks

Smaller types of parks that are primarily used by local residents are grouped in the park classification system under the category of Community Use Parks. There are four types of Community Use Parks: Community Use Urban Parks (Urban Buffer Parks, Neighborhood Greens, Community Use Urban Parks), Neighborhood Parks, Local Parks, and Neighborhood Conservation Areas.

These parks provide everyday recreation needs for residents close to home. Currently there are over 200 developed community use parks. Many are located within the down-county area where they were placed to serve County development in the 1950s and 60s. As new park construction tries to keep pace with an ever-expanding County population, more parks are now being developed in rapidly growing up-county areas.

- COMMUNITY USE URBAN PARKS

Urban Parks serve central business districts or other highly urban areas, providing green space in an often otherwise concrete environment. Urban parks serve an important role as gathering places for the community and accommodate activities such as concerts and performances, celebrations, fairs, and outdoor spaces for area employees to have lunch. Nearly all of the County's 19 developed urban parks are located in the down-County with concentrations in the Bethesda and Silver Spring areas.

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These parks may be programmed for more localized events, but not countywide events. No parking is available on the park property. Subcategories include Urban Buffer Parks, Neighborhood Greens, and Community Use Urban Recreational Parks.

- **URBAN BUFFER PARKS**

Urban Buffer Parks serve as green buffers at the edges of urban, high density development adjacent to lower density residential areas. They provide a green space within which residents and workers of an urban area may relax and recreate. Landscaping, sitting/picnic areas, play equipment, courts, and shelters are typical facilities.

- **NEIGHBORHOOD GREENS**

Neighborhood Greens serve the residents and workers from the surrounding neighborhood or district, but may be designed for more activity than an urban buffer park. These formally planned, flexible open spaces serve as places for informal gathering, lunchtime relaxation, or small special event gatherings. Lawn area, shaded seating and pathways are typical facilities. Facility may also include a play area, a skate spot, a community garden, or similar neighborhood facilities.

- **POCKET GREENS**

The new park type of Pocket Greens will play an important role in the network of public spaces that will be encouraged in higher density areas. The presence of these smaller park types will allow for “pauses” in a landscaped setting along the route between major and larger open spaces within the network. These spaces are particularly important in areas where commercial activities are taking place to allow workers to take a lunch or coffee break while enjoying a contemplative environment. Research has suggested that smaller breaks during the work schedule increases productivity and health, especially mental health. This proposed new park type ... Serve residents and workers from nearby area, designed for relaxation, lunch breaks, small games, play area for children, and outdoor eating. Due to its small scale, the space should be highly visible from the street, and connect to the public space network and include access to sunlight, important view corridors, connection to the network of public spaces, and protection from the wind, traffic and noise.

- **COMMUNITY USE URBAN RECREATIONAL PARKS**

Community-use Urban Recreational Parks are parks that serve the residents and workers from the surrounding neighborhood or district, and are designed for more active recreation than an urban buffer park or a neighborhood green. Typical facilities include sport courts, skate spots, and may include lawn areas, playgrounds or similar neighborhood recreation facilities.

- **NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

These park types are small, generally, walk-to parks providing informal leisure opportunities and recreation in heavily populated areas. They often provide about five acres of open space developed with a sitting area, playground, informal play field, and tennis and/or basketball courts. There are 74 developed neighborhood parks in the County, with the largest number found in the Wheaton, Silver Spring, and Bethesda areas where they were developed to serve early concentrations of single-family housing.

- **LOCAL PARKS**

Local Parks provide both programmed and informal recreation opportunities within reach of all area residents. Typically, about ten to fifteen acres in size, these parks contain athletic fields,

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tennis and basketball courts, picnic and playground areas, and sometimes recreation buildings and other facilities.

The major difference between neighborhood and local parks is that the local parks provide regulation size athletic fields that can be reserved for game play. Over 40% of the people visiting local parks in 1996 were either league players or league game spectators. Ballplayers attend games on fields near their homes, or travel to other parts of the County to challenge opposing teams. Therefore, local parks often have large service areas. Many people drive to local parks, while many neighborhood parks are within walking distance.

Many down-County local parks include small recreation centers that are used for classes, social events, and other similar activities. Some local parks also include other facilities as swimming pools that serve large areas of the County. Some of these parks, such as Sligo-Dennis, are located adjacent to stream valley park areas and provide both active and passive recreation opportunities.

The Commission cooperates with other agencies to use tax monies as wisely as possible. Parks provide facilities for many of the programs sponsored by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Many local parks are adjacent to schools and give school children more room to play during the day and families more recreation spaces on the weekend.

- **NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION AREAS**

These are small pieces of parkland preserved in residential areas. They are generally conveyed to M-NCPPC during the subdivision process and frequently contain streams or drainage areas and adjacent wooded slopes. They remain undeveloped and benefit the neighborhood by providing open space, reducing storm water runoff, and bringing nature into an urban environment.

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Figure 7 - Proposed Update to the Park Type Summary Chart

| PARK TYPE | PARK TYPE DESCRIPTION | TYPICAL FACILITIES* | APPROX. SIZE |
|---|---|--|--|
| COUNTYWIDE PARKS - Parks in this category serve all residents of Montgomery County | | | |
| - Recreational Oriented Parks | | | |
| REGIONAL PARKS | Large Parks that provide a wide range of recreational opportunities but retain 2/3 of the acreage as conservation areas. | Picnic / playground areas, tennis courts, athletic fields, golf course, campgrounds, and water-oriented recreation areas. | 200 ACRES OR MORE |
| RECREATIONAL PARKS | Parks larger than 50 acres in size that are more intensively developed than Regional Parks, but may also contain natural areas. | Athletic fields, tennis courts, multi-use courts, picnic/playground areas, golf course, trails, and natural areas. | 50 ACRES OR MORE |
| SPECIAL PARKS | These parks include areas that contain features of historic and cultural significance. | Vary, but may include agricultural centers, garden, small conference centers, and historic structures, etc. | VARIES |
| - Countywide Urban Parks | | | |
| CIVIC GREENS | Formally planned, flexible, programmable open spaces that serve as places for informal gathering, quiet contemplation, or large special event gatherings. Depending on size, they may support activities including open air markets, concerts, festivals, and special events but are not often used for programmed recreational purposes. | A central lawn is often the main focus with adjacent spaces providing complementary uses. May include gardens, water features and shade structures. | 1/2 ACRE MINIMUM 1.5 ACRE IDEAL |
| PLAZAS | Formally planned, predominantly hardscaped open spaces for pedestrian traffic from nearby transit stops and commercial and higher density residential uses. Depending on size, they may support activities including open air markets, concerts, festivals, and special events, but are not often used for active recreational purposes. Consider access to sunlight and connection to the network of public spaces, and protection from the wind, traffic and noise. | Central hardscaped gathering area with public art/water feature as focal point. May include special lighting, shaded areas, and benches and tables. Consider temporary closure of local streets to enlarge the size of the plaza for special events. Playful and interactive elements are encouraged. | 1/2 ACRE MINIMUM 1 ACRE IDEAL |
| URBAN RECREATIONAL PARKS | Oriented to the recreational needs of a densely populated neighborhood and business district. They provide space for many activities. | May include athletic fields, playing courts, picnicking, dog parks, sitting areas and flexible grassy open space. Programming can include farmer's markets, outdoor exercise classes, and community yard sales. There is space for a safe drop-off area and nearby accessible parking for those who cannot walk to the park. | VARIES |
| URBAN GREENWAYS | Linear parks that provide trails or wide landscaped walkways and bikeways and may include other recreational and natural amenities. May occur along road rights of way or "paper" streets. | Trails, walkways and bikeways, with extra space for vegetative ground cover and trees. Should link other green spaces, trails and natural systems. | VARIES |

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| PARK TYPE | PARK TYPE DESCRIPTION | TYPICAL FACILITIES* | APPROX. SIZE |
|--|---|---|--------------------------|
| - Conservation Oriented Parks | | | |
| STREAM VALLEY PARKS | Interconnected linear parks along major stream valleys providing conservation and recreation areas. | Hiker-biker trails, fishing, picnicking, playground areas. | VARIES |
| CONSERVATION AREA PARKS | Large natural areas acquired to preserve specific natural archaeological or historic features. They also provide opportunities of compatible recreation activities. | Trails, fishing areas, nature study areas, and informal picnic areas. | VARIES |
| COMMUNITY USE PARKS - Parks in this category serve residents of surrounding communities | | | |
| - Community Use Urban Parks | | | |
| URBAN BUFFER PARKS | Serve as green buffers at the edges of urban, high density development adjacent to lower density residential areas. They provide a green space within which residents and workers of an urban area may relax and recreate. | Landscaping, sitting/picnic areas, play equipment, courts, and shelters. | 1/4 ACRE MINIMUM |
| NEIGHBORHOOD GREENS | Serve the residents and workers from the surrounding neighborhood or district, but may be designed for more activity than an urban buffer park. These formally planned, flexible open spaces serve as places for informal gathering, lunchtime relaxation, or small special event gatherings. | Lawn area, shaded seating and pathways. May include a play area, a skate spot, a community garden, or similar neighborhood facilities. | 1/4 ACRE MINIMUM |
| POCKET GREENS | Serve residents and workers from nearby area, designed for relaxation, lunch breaks, small games, play area for children, and outdoor eating. Consider access to sunlight, important view corridors, connection to the network of public spaces, and protection from the wind, traffic and noise. | Program and design should reflect the demographics and culture of its surrounding users. Sunlit small gathering areas, shaded seating, small children play areas. May include movable furniture, focal point public art, and small-scale green areas and trees. | 1/10-1/4 ACRE |
| URBAN RECREATIONAL PARKS | These parks serve the residents and workers from the surrounding neighborhood or district, and are designed for more active recreation than an urban buffer park or a neighborhood green. | Sport courts, skate spots, and may include lawn areas, playgrounds or similar neighborhood recreation facilities. | 1/10 ACRE MINIMUM |
| NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS | Small parks providing informal recreation in residential areas. | Play equipment, play field, sitting area, shelter, tennis and Multi-use courts. (Do not include regulation size ballfields). | 2.5 ACRE |
| LOCAL PARKS | Larger parks that provide ballfields and both programmed and un-programmed recreation facilities. | Ballfields, play equipment, tennis and multi-use courts, sitting/picnic area, shelters, buildings and other facilities. | 15 ACRE |
| NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION AREAS | Small parcels of conservation oriented parkland in residential areas, generally dedicated at the time of subdivision. | Generally undeveloped, may include a stormwater management pond and related facilities. | VARIES |

Implementation Strategies

NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION THREE PILLARS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), has as its core mission to impact communities through three pillars of Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity (<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/>). These overarching themes are important in guiding the priorities of Montgomery Parks and the Recreation Department.

Conservation

Protecting open space, connecting people to nature, and engaging communities in conservation practices.

“Local park and recreation agencies play a vital role in the protection of our environment through green infrastructure, conservation of public lands, providing wildlife habitat and more. In a world where people are increasingly disconnected to nature, local parks also are essential in creating environmental stewards who will advocate for and protect our most precious public resources – our land, water, trees, open spaces and wildlife...”
‘...Our areas of focus include promoting sustainable practices including green infrastructure and other strategies that address the effects of climate change, preserving wildlife, growing a next generation of environmental stewards, and supporting programs and policies that encourage a commitment to conservation.’

Montgomery Parks supports this pillar in several ways, by promoting environmental stewardship and literacy, managing volunteer programs to tackle non-native invasive species, trails, and stream cleanups, and by providing attractive, safe, and interesting opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors. Montgomery Parks is a key player in environmental literacy planning in Maryland by public programming that supports Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Maryland State environmental literacy standards.

Environmental literacy is a critical objective for the park and recreation industry, because it has a number of “positive impacts, from improving academic performance, to enhancing critical thinking skills, to developing personal growth and life-building skills including confidence, autonomy, and leadership. In addition, a number of the studies showed that environmental education increased civic engagement and positive environmental behaviors.” <https://naaee.org/eepr/research/eeprworks/benefits-environmental-education-k-12>

Health and Wellness

Leading the nation to improved health and wellness through parks and recreation.

Local park and recreation agencies provide crucial health and wellness opportunities for all populations in communities across the country. As America continues to face serious health issues including rising rates of chronic disease, an increased prevalence of sedentary lifestyles and poor nutrition habits, parks and recreation offer an affordable and accessible solution.

NRPA works with local park and recreation agencies to provide tools, resources and technical assistance to improve access to healthy foods and increase opportunities for people to be physically active in their communities. Our areas of focus include ensuring that all people have safe access to quality park and recreation facilities and programming; promoting healthy eating and physical activity standards; expanding access to evidence-based health prevention programs; connecting parks and the health community, and supporting programs and policies that eliminate health disparities.

Montgomery Parks supports this pillar in several ways. The Department of Parks, the Department of Recreation and numerous other County agencies (schools, transportation, housing, health and human services and planning) are collectively meeting to determine a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Montgomery County. The goals for this plan are to achieve health equity for all residents, improving access to health and social services and enhancing the physical and social environment to support optimal health and well-being and reduce unhealthy behaviors.

Montgomery County is facing unprecedented challenges in meeting the behavioral and chronic health needs of County residents. Although all of the departments are involved in providing some level of health services and programs, each have a niche of expertise and specialized viewpoint, resulting in little coherence or synergy among all the services afford. In order to address increasing health needs, there needs to be a collective understanding of what is currently being provided and what can be done as a coordinated response to meet the needs.

The Department of Parks is a key player in this effort, in that it is essentially a health care provider. As a provider of park and recreational amenities, Parks is responsible for safe, accessible and attractive open spaces and amenities for people to enjoy for the benefit of their health. Access to nature has a positive influence of people's mental and physical health. The Department of Parks currently has many parks and amenities to meet physical active health needs of the community. The many acres of natural environments for contemplative experiences are a great benefit to the mental and restorative health of the residents. With the growth of the county continuing at the rate it has been growing, providing more open spaces, programs to address health needs and access to them will be the challenge.

Social Equity

Ensuring all people have access to the benefits of local parks and recreation.

“True to the very philosophy of public parks and recreation is the idea that all people – no matter the color of their skin, age, income level or ability – have access to programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great. Parks and recreation truly build communities – communities for all.

NRPA works with local park and recreation agencies to provide tools, resources, and technical assistance to ensure all people have access and are meaningfully involved in the development and use of park and recreation programs and spaces. Our areas of focus include ensuring all people have safe access to quality park and recreation facilities and programming, expanding access to meal programs for children, investing in park improvement projects for communities that need it most, and supporting programs and policies that protect our most vulnerable communities from environmental and health hazards”.

Montgomery Parks supports this pillar in several ways. The *2017 PROS Plan* outreach focused on populations in the County who have not traditionally participated in planning processes. The plan also includes as an analysis of Park Proximity and an analysis of Park Equity as required by the State of Maryland for the first time (see Appendix 4, Park Proximity and Park Equity Analysis).

PARK EQUITY AND PROXIMITY ANALYSES

The State defines park equity much as the NRPA defines social equity. The analysis required by the State is intended to “aid in identification of areas where underserved populations do not have easy access to parks close to home.” *Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Guidelines, Final Draft, July 2015*, page 9. Through data collection and geospatial analysis, the analysis preliminarily identifies areas of the County that may have:

- Lower park equity based on high concentrations of lower income households with low walkable access to park entrances and trailheads.

The utility of these analyses is to help the Montgomery Parks provide services and facilities in areas of low park equity. The investment for improving Park Proximity or Park Equity in a particular location should depend on more detailed analysis to determine whether improvements in access or improvements in facilities would fill the gap identified on the maps. Resulting recommendations could consist of:

- Prioritizing the replacement of individual park components that have reached the end of their life cycle after a facility condition assessment
- Identifying and eliminating barriers to walking from neighborhoods to existing parks
- Providing new facilities as identified in the PROS Plan
- Re-thinking an entire park if the current layout no longer meets the needs of the residents

This Plan recommends that Park Equity be added to the prioritization criteria for the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The Park Equity Analysis assigns each census block in the County a Park Equity score, based on values assigned to levels of density, income, and walkable access. The score of an area could be considered along with other factors when the Department of Parks evaluates potential projects to be funded. Those projects in areas lowest Park Equity would rise above some other projects in a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) priority list for level of effort project or a stand-alone project funding. Additional information follows in this chapter (Balancing Renovation, Development and Acquisition).

The Park Proximity Analysis shows areas of lower proximity to the amenities indicated by Vision 2030 to be the most popular – playgrounds, trails, and natural areas. This analysis will help identify service gaps that will inform recommendations in master and sector plans, development review, and in park master plans, site selections, and park programs of requirement.

ACCESSIBILITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN M-NCPPC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

M-NCPPC is dedicated to providing quality services and park and recreation programs that are inclusive and accessible to patrons. M-NCPPC complies with applicable laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, by taking all reasonable steps to remove barriers to participation in programs and services. In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, M-NCPPC does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs and activities. *Source: M-NCPPC Notice 15-01, May 6, 2015*

ADA Federal Laws and Guidance

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act provides comprehensive civil rights protections for "qualified individuals with disabilities." An "individual with a disability" is a person who --

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a "major life activity", or
- Has a record of such an impairment, or
- Is regarded as having such an impairment.

Examples of physical or developmental impairments include, but are not limited to, orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments; cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, specific learning disabilities, HIV disease (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic), tuberculosis, drug addiction, and alcoholism.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifies that state and local governments:

- May not refuse to allow a person with a disability to participate in a service, program, or activity simply because the person has a disability. For example, a city may not refuse to allow a person with epilepsy to use parks and recreational facilities.
- Must provide programs and services in an integrated setting, unless separate or different measures are necessary to ensure equal opportunity.

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- Must eliminate unnecessary eligibility standards or rules that deny individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to enjoy their services, programs or activities unless "necessary" for the provisions of the service, program or activity.
- Are required to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, and procedures that deny equal access to individuals with disabilities, unless a fundamental alteration in the program would result. For example, a city office building would be required to make an exception to a rule prohibiting animals in public areas in order to admit service animals assisting individuals with disabilities.
- Must furnish auxiliary aids and services when necessary to ensure effective communication, unless an undue burden or fundamental alteration would result.
- May provide special benefits, beyond those required by the regulation, to individuals with disabilities.
- May not place special charges on individuals with disabilities to cover the costs of measures necessary to ensure nondiscriminatory treatment, such as making modifications required to provide program accessibility or providing qualified interpreters.
- Shall operate their programs so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Existing and Proposed Parks Department Policies

In 2006, the Department of Justice (DOJ), as part of its Project Civic Access initiative, conducted a comprehensive analysis of Montgomery County and M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks for compliance with Title II requirements. Because of this mutually coordinated effort, DOJ, Montgomery County, and M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks entered into a Settlement Agreement (SA). This agreement, entitled "Settlement Agreement between the United States of America and Montgomery County, Maryland and Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission under the Americans with Disabilities Act DJ 204-35-256" is signed and dated August 16, 2011.

The Settlement Agreement stipulates in part that M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks conduct self-evaluations over a specified timeline, perform upgrades at 19 specific facilities between 2011 and 2016, and submit an Interim Transition Plan (ITP) every year, with the Final Transition Plan (FTP) submitted in August 2016. The SA further requires that M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks evaluate all of its programs, services, and activities for conformance with the ADA, requires certain signage upgrades at various buildings throughout its inventory, increase community outreach efforts, provide effective communications upgrades (namely to the Parks website), provide ongoing employee training, and adopt grievance procedures and various other policies. In accordance with the Settlement Agreement, all transition plans, including the FTP, have been made available online and in hard copy for the public to view and provide comments. Parks has also prepared a condensed version of the Transition Plan for public review and comment, which can be found on the Parks website.

In 2010, the Department of Justice issued revised and expanded ADA regulations. The new regulations revised and updated earlier standards as well as included new standards for various recreational uses such as play equipment, amusement rides, fishing piers, etc. These are collectively called the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (the "2010 Standards"). These new standards guide all new park

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construction and renovation projects. All facilities and parks have been evaluated using the 2010 Standards. Furthermore, Montgomery Parks elected to evaluate paved trails, campgrounds, and other outdoor facilities with yet-to-be adopted guidelines proposed by the US Access Board as a best practice. Currently, the ABA Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas (ABA Guidelines) are applicable to certain federal agencies on federally owned lands, and to vendors who may conduct certain activities on behalf of the federal government on federal properties.

Montgomery Parks has fully complied with the terms of the 2011 Settlement Agreement including the following major targets:

- Completed self-evaluations of all park properties one year ahead of schedule;
- Submitted all Interim Transition Plans as well as the Final Transition Plan on schedule;
- Completed accessibility upgrades at all 19 parks site identified by DOJ plus 2 additional substitute sites;
- Installed the required signage improvements;
- Evaluated all programs and offerings of the park system and identified program access remedies where applicable. Further a Program Access office was established to provide inclusion services, training, and reasonable modifications;
- Updated the Parks website and other communication elements as necessary;
- Provided ongoing training for all existing employees as well as for new employees; and
- Initiated various policies and procedures identified in the Settlement Agreement.

The Final Transition Plan was submitted in August 2016 and has received tentative approval by DOJ. The proposed strategy for ADA compliance is a multi-stage approach for physical access as well as program access. The goal of this strategy is to ensure that the programs, services, and opportunities offered by Montgomery Parks are accessible to the citizens of the County, regardless of abilities. In keeping with this spirit, the ADA Access Team has been established and works cooperatively to ensure accessibility and inclusion within our Parks, amenities and programs.

Physical access focuses on both recurring amenities and unique amenities. Recurring amenities are those which occur and are repeated in a number of parks, such as playgrounds, playing fields, basketball and tennis courts, and other recreation amenities. A unique amenity is defined as one offering a singular experience or activity in the Park System. Examples include historic buildings and sites, a tai-chi court, a carousel, and a golf driving range. M-NCPPC recognizes that a few unique amenities within its system may be duplicated, however, due to unique types of offerings, geographies, or overall uses, those amenities can still be defined as unique as a matter of policy. Examples of these types of amenities include Brookside Gardens, archery ranges, ice rinks, and several of the nature centers. At its foundation, the proposed strategy is to ensure that at least one in three recurring amenities and all unique amenities are accessible, subject to various limitations such as technically infeasible conditions and funding limitations. The strategy takes into account numerous factors such as population density, proximity to public transportation, park types (countywide vs. community), amenity uniqueness, and other factors. This strategy will enable the best use of available funds to provide the optimal facility access to park programs for all citizens. Additionally, the objective is to provide a reasonable geographic distribution of accessible amenities throughout the County as well as establishing a destination trip limit of approximately 15-20 minutes by vehicle. The long term and ultimate goal, after full implementation

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of the Final Transition Plan, is to provide accessibility and inclusion to all programs, services, and opportunities within Montgomery County. The results of the self-evaluation process identified 13,600 physical barriers to accessibility as defined by the ADA regulations and the ABA Guidelines. Barrier removals will be funded through various sources including several CIP funds, Enterprise, and operating funds. Current estimates indicate that, at current funding levels, the process to remove the barriers identified in the FTP will require approximately 20-25 years to achieve.

PROGRAM ACCESS

Program Access focuses on inclusion by coordinating reasonable modifications for individuals with disabilities to be successfully included in countywide parks, recreation and leisure programs. Most of the programs offered by Parks are concentrated in the following areas: nature and environmental educational programs, ice skating lessons, hockey, synchronized skating, tennis, specialized sports, archaeology, history programs and a full schedule of day camps and events. Volunteer service projects are abundant as they instill stewardship within our Parks system. These activities make up a diverse and exciting program schedule for all patrons to enjoy and for a full experience reasonable modifications are coordinated for successful inclusion:

- Trained Support Staff: seasonal/part-time paid staff that shadow/support an individual with a disability or shadow a small group of individuals with disabilities in programs;
- Companions: volunteers that support individuals with disabilities. This may also include family members, personal care providers, and other support;
- Adaptive equipment: for program participants who need specialized equipment that assist with successful program participation;
- Braille, large print materials: for program participants who are blind or have low vision;
- Audio Description: for program participants who are blind or have low vision;
- Assisted Listening Devices: for program participants who are deaf or have hearing loss;
- Sign language interpreters: for program participants who are deaf, have hearing loss and/or are non-verbal.

Since its inception, the Program Access Office has coordinated over 206 direct reasonable modifications for individuals with disabilities to be successfully included in Parks programs.

In addition to modification management, Office staff research and develop policy initiatives; employee training and educational programs; and acts as a resource for staff. Since November 2015, the Program Access Office has trained over 850 Parks employees in the ADA, Inclusion and Access, and other disability awareness educational programs and trainings.

The Final Transition Plan, including both physical as well as program access, reflects M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks' commitment to achieving accessibility within the park system and demonstrates substantial and sustainable progress to date. Yet much remains to be done. The effort to achieve accessibility and inclusion affects every division within M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks, and is an integral part of daily operations. The goal of an integrated effort toward serving the disability community as well as the broader user base is the keystone of the Final Transition Plan as well as all future efforts by Montgomery Parks.

LOOKING AHEAD – BEYOND THE 2016 FINAL TRANSITION PLAN

This Final Transition Plan has dealt primarily with the requirements of the 2011 Settlement Agreement, physical and programmatic barrier removals, the 2010 ADA Standards, and Title II compliance. All are legal requirements establishing the minimum thresholds for accessibility for all individuals and participants in the Montgomery Parks system. Beyond these minimums however, Montgomery Parks hopes to achieve more than the aforementioned minimums. Initiatives the Department hopes to pursue include the following:

Access to Open Space and Trails

One of the signature assets of Montgomery County Parks is its system of undisturbed open space and natural areas as well as its network of trails. The benefits to the public including those with disabilities is significant. Although specific adopted design standards do not currently exist, access to these areas is and will be an important mission of the Department in the years ahead. Initially, the Department will identify possible parking areas and trailheads which provide or could provide reasonable levels of accessibility using the ADA Outdoor Guidelines. Ultimately, the goal is to provide reasonable access to approximately 5% of trails in the County.

Promote and Increase Accessible Amenities and Inclusion in Park and Facility Settings

To increase inclusion in parks, the Department of Parks intends to:

- Repurpose/develop land into multi-generational parks for all ages and abilities to recreate together in an inclusive setting; develop and/or enhance sensory trails, gardens and spaces.
- Develop/enhance specific trails into adventure trails/courses for individuals with limited mobility who want to increase their strength, stamina and individual wellness programs.
- Initiate a partnership with Walter Reed Medical and Rehabilitation Center located in the county to accommodate wounded soldiers as part of their overall wellness/ treatment/recovery plan or similar organization. Provide access for students to utilize parks and natural spaces to engage in programs/activities as part of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) approach to education.

Utilize Technology / Website Accessibility to Provide Current and More Accurate Information to the Public

In the coming years, information /data concerning accessible parks, amenities, and/or programs needs to be readily available to the public. It is anticipated that this information will be developed and housed in a Geographic Information System (GIS) database. Information stored and regularly updated in GIS will be linked to the Parks Website thus enabling any person the ability to easily and readily determine the location or type of accessible amenities anywhere in the Montgomery County park system. The GIS database may be linking to the SmartParks/EAM system thereby resulting in current “live” updates of parks and the accessible features within the system. The goal to implement these or similar features prior to the end of the Phase One cycle of the Transition Plan.

AGE-FRIENDLY MONTGOMERY

Montgomery County is Maryland's first jurisdiction to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. By the year 2030, more than 18 percent of the residents in the county will be over the age of 65. Since 2015 when the county joined the network, it has accomplished many initiatives to serve its older adult population. ["Montgomery County: A Community for a Lifetime: Summary of Accomplishments FY2008-FY2015."](#)

Physical Improvements and Programmatic Considerations

Montgomery Parks is committed to working with Age-Friendly initiatives by designing parks with amenities to serve multigenerational groups. The Department is currently working with a regional team partnering with the World Health Organization (WHO), AARP, local Montgomery County agencies and others to assist in the implementation of the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities initiative for the aging population. This initiative is to enhance amenities to be more age-friendly. Appropriate pillars of this initiative include:

- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Communication and information

These pillars coincide with the mission of the Montgomery County Parks Department, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Specifically, the Department plans to design and or repurpose parks to be senior-friendly with features such as sensory trails, and adventure trails/courses for individuals with physical disabilities to engage in healthy, active exercise, and gardens.

PARTNERING TO ACHIEVE SHARED VISIONS

Montgomery Parks enters into partnerships with various organizations in order to better deliver park and recreation services to residents. Partnering includes everything from volunteers who help enhance and maintain the park system and its services, to donors, to "Friends Of" groups, to those who operate programs on parkland under specific agreements.

Many of the projects resulting from partnerships are unsolicited, meaning a group approaches the department with an idea, and often funding, to create a new facility on county parkland. This type of partnership requires only staff time to evaluate the proposal and does not impact the department's operating or capital budget. The department's role in such a partnership is simply approving the use of parkland to deliver the service. Examples of this type of partnership include GoApe! In Rock Creek Regional Park and a new plaza along the Capital Crescent Trail at River Road funded by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail. By contrast, some partnerships are solicited, whereby the department issues a request for proposals (or expression of interest) for a specific facility or program need, and the department co-operates or co-manages the facility or program. An example of this type of partnership are community gardens. Both types of partnerships fill critical gaps in delivering programs and services to county residents, saving taxpayer dollars in both the department's operating budget and also its capital budget. Other types of partnerships include those generated by a land acquisition or donation, a condition of a purchase contract, and requests from elected officials.

Volunteers

Montgomery Parks engages the aid of thousands of community volunteers coordinated through a centralized Volunteer Services Office and managed by staff throughout the agency. Over the last five years, over 50,000 people have participated in at least one volunteer opportunity in parks, contributing over 420,000 hours of service with a value-added contribution of nearly ten million dollars. Among the most popular volunteer activities are our various environmental stewardship efforts including short term projects like stream clean ups and tree plantings, as well as longer term commitments such as controlling invasive plants through our Weed Warrior program. Additional opportunities to help with education and visitor services exist at our nature centers, public gardens, historic sites and many other facilities.

Parks Foundation

The Montgomery County Parks Foundation (The Foundation) is by far the department's largest partner. It was established in 1992 as an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Serving as a champion for M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks, The Foundation promotes the values and benefits of the park system to Montgomery County residents and policy-makers. The Foundation provides opportunities for county residents and businesses to support M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and is a fundraising and support organization to M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks. The Foundation does not directly operate park facilities or programs. Funds raised by the Foundation can be transferred to M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks where specialized staff acquire parkland, build and maintain park facilities and deliver services to the public or the Foundation can contract, procure and purchase directly with vendors on behalf of M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks.

HISTORY

During the first part of the five-year period since 2012, the Parks Foundation focused on establishing the policy "infrastructure" necessary to set the stage for robust fundraising efforts. In November 2013, the Commission and the Parks Foundation executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to govern the relationship between both entities. During 2013-2014, several policies were approved, including the Corporate Sponsorship Policy, the Financial and Control Policies, the Investment Policy and the Trust Agreement. As adopted by the Foundation's Board of Trustees on July 23, 2013, the mission of the Foundation is stated as follows:

"The Montgomery Parks Foundation champions Montgomery County Parks cultivating financial support and public engagement of county residents and businesses as members, donors, sponsors and advocates."

The current business model of the Parks Foundation involves leveraging in-kind support from the Parks Department to generate a significant Return on Investment (ROI) for the assistance provided.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

With the policy infrastructure in place, the Parks Foundation was able to turn to fundraising. During the second part of the five-year period, the Foundation:

- Was instrumental in securing donations made directly to the Parks Department, for various county parks and trails, totaling \$2,160,000 in 2015;

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- Transferred \$1 million for the construction of the Greenhouse at Brookside Gardens;
- Obtained \$250,000 in State funding through three bond bills: (1) for the renovation and reconstruction of a key trail connection in Little Bennett Regional Park; (2) the re-opening of a nature center at Maydale Conservation Park; and (3) necessary safety improvements and accessibility renovations at Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Park;
- Secured \$150,000 for the renovation of the Kensington Cabin;
- Achieved significant increases in the Parks Budget and Capital appropriations by mobilizing advocates for “Friends of Montgomery Parks” early in 2016 and, during the Fall, held a successful “Advocacy Dinner” to kick-off next year’s cycle;
- Hired a Corporate Sponsorship Manager on September 26, 2016 to implement the Corporate Sponsorship Program and recorded the first corporate sponsorship agreement with Olde Towne Pet Resort for one year fee of \$5,625 for banners in three dog parks;
- Awarded funding for: a portable pump track (\$30,000); a speaker at the Trees Matter Symposium (\$5,000); a real-time trail use display (\$35,000); and repairs to the Harper Cabin (\$30,000);
- Established a new procedure with the Parks Department for the prioritization of fundraising by the Foundation, resulting in three items being placed on the Foundation’s work plan in 2017: (1) a “Living Classroom” at Black Hill Nature Center (\$550,000); (2) new exhibits for the four Nature Centers (\$180,000); and (3) an “Outdoor Classroom” at Brookside Nature Center (\$80,000);
- Reached fundraising target for the Western Grove Urban Park (\$140,545) by helping to establish the Friends of Western Grove Urban Park;
- Acquired \$10,000 donation for improvements to the Dotson Memorial Garden at Locust Grove Nature Center;
- Attained goal for “quiet phase” of fundraising for the River Road Plaza on the Capital Crescent Trail (\$64,550) by working with the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail; and
- Held two successful “Josiah Henson Leadership Conferences” by partnering with Montgomery Community Media on February 22nd and June 15th to help achieve the \$2 million fundraising goal for the Josiah Henson Park Museum & Education Center.

In summary, the Parks Foundation current business model has resulted in a considerable positive ROI for the Department in each year since the execution of the MOU.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The Foundation’s Strategic Plan has expired and the Foundation Board will begin the development of a new strategic plan in the spring. One of the questions before the Foundation Board, with input from the Department, is whether to continue the current business model or move to operate as a “stand-alone” foundation with little or no support from the Department. Importantly, several other similar foundations, such as the Fairfax County Park Foundation, follow the current business model of the Montgomery Parks Foundation. The decision as to the long-range goal of the structure of the Parks Foundation will influence the amounts raised and the use of those funds over the next five years.

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Community and Public-Private Partnerships

Montgomery Parks works with entities in the business and non-profit sectors to enhance parks and recreational facilities. These strategic partnerships provide a range of goods and services with benefits to the general public as well as to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Our partners share our mission—to protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer various enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places. Partners may include an individual or corporation, whether non-profit or for-profit, that:

- Operates and manages, under a long-term legal agreement, a facility on park property that is consistent with the mission of M-NCPPC;
- Manages a program established to support the protection or enhancement of parkland and is consistent with the mission of M-NCPPC;
- Operates or manages a facility on parkland that constitutes a community service or recreational/educational opportunity that is consistent with the mission of M-NCPPC;
- Has a revenue stream and paid personnel; and
- Is not an all-volunteer organization or “friends” group that is focused solely on one particular park or facility.

There are three main categories of partnerships on M-NCPPC parkland:

Serving people with disabilities (sports, employment, therapy).

Examples include Miracle League at South Germantown Recreational Park; Red Wiggler Community Farm at Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park; and Great and Small Therapeutic Riding at Rickman Farm Horse Park.

Offering public education.

Examples include King Barn Dairy Mooseum at South Germantown Recreational Park; Hyattstown Mill Arts Project in Little Bennett Park; and National Capital Trolley Museum at Northwest Branch Recreational Park.

Offering sports/recreation services.

Example include equestrian facilities throughout the county (Calithea Farm Stables, Meadowbrook Stables, Potomac Horse Center, Wheaton Regional Park Stables), athletic fields throughout the county (UMAC Baseball, Burtonsville Athletic Association, Bethesda Little League, Povich Field -- Big Train and Georgetown University, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Baseball Club, Maryland Community Baseball), Maryland Soccer Foundation (soccerplex) at South Germantown Recreational Park, Jack Shore Tennis (Tennisplex) at South Germantown Recreational Park, and Go Ape! At Rock Creek Regional Park.

A fourth category could include wildlife services (Second Chance Wildlife Center in Gaithersburg).

The Partnership Program is housed in the Division of Public Affairs and Community Partnerships, in large part because managing partners is all about maintaining strong relationships, which involve public relations and communicating regularly with partners as well as nearby communities. Montgomery Parks selects partners that are equipped to succeed, and thus has a stake in the success of all the above partnerships. While the department subsidizes certain costs (land, systemic maintenance), an intangible

benefit is that underutilized parkland on which these facilities are located become activated. These organizations not only become long-term providers of needed programs and services in the county, but more than that, they also become long-term stewards of not only the recreational amenities, and also the natural environment.

BALANCING RENOVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

To serve the park and recreation needs of the citizens of Montgomery County as identified in this PROS Plan and other studies and master plans, the Parks Department utilizes three main strategies:

- Renovate and Repurpose Existing Facilities –to provide better quality service and the right type of service in the right location
- Develop New Facilities on Existing Parkland –where we have available space in already developed parks or a park site that has yet to be developed to meet its service intent
- Acquire Additional Land –to provide space for needed facilities where renovation, repurposing, and development alone cannot meet documented needs
- To fill service gaps with the most cost effective and efficient solutions, these strategies are often used sequentially. For example, if an area has a need for a new playground, Parks will first determine if we can add a playground to an existing developed park in an area already developed with a less needed facility. If there is no opportunity for repurposing, then Parks would examine options for developing a new playground in an undeveloped area on existing parkland. Finally, if neither of those strategies present an opportunity to fill the need, then acquisition of additional land will be pursued to provide a platform for a necessary playground. These three strategies are implemented through the Parks Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that funds the necessary development projects and land acquisitions.
- As discussed above, partnership opportunities are increasingly pursued as a supplement to these three primary strategies to meet natural and cultural conservation and parks and recreation needs across the County.

Parks Capital Improvement Program: Renovation and Development

The biennial process of creating the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a critical element for aligning Parks spending recommendations with our overall goals and identified priorities. CIP projects for facility rehabilitation and facility development originate from a variety of sources to meet goals and recommendations in Vision 2030, this PROS plan, park master plans, area master/sector plans, and other plans and studies. New projects also result from public input via a biennial CIP Forum and online requests, Planning Board and County Council directives, and the addition of new land to the park system via developer dedication and acquisition.

PRIORITIZING CIP PROJECTS

Proposed projects are evaluated for consistency with State and County goals for recreation, parks and open space. Additional assessment criteria are used to help sort and prioritize proposed CIP projects. This PROS Plan recommends the additional criterion of Park Equity to prioritize services to areas of

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higher populations of lower income residents with low levels of access to parks. With the addition of Park Equity as a criterion, these project assessment criteria would include:

- Provides Park Equity
- Renovates Aging Infrastructure
- Fulfills Required Mandates
- Stewards Natural or Cultural Resources
- Supports Plans or Studies
- Meets Public Request
- Enhances Safety
- Generates Revenue
- Minimizes Operating Budget Impact

After the initial assessment of proposed CIP projects, they are prioritized according to the Planning Board's adopted CIP Strategy that is revised every two years during the CIP process. Issues commonly in the Planning Board's Strategy include:

- Immediacy – protect health and safety; comply with codes and laws; keep on schedule with integrated projects; prevent degradation of natural or cultural resources
- Need – provide facilities to underserved geographies and populations; ensure an equitable park system; meet unmet needs identified in plans and by communities
- Efficiency – increases revenue, cost savings, or operational efficiency; leverages partnership and grant opportunities; prevents future costs from lack of maintenance; has low cost/benefit ratio

Additional issues emphasized by the Planning Board for the FY17-22 CIP include the following strategies:

- Public Access to Natural Areas – serve park users with improved natural resource-based recreation opportunities while protecting key resources
- Trails – increase hard surface and natural surface trail construction and renovation efforts
- Athletic Fields – make ballfields available and convenient
- Urban Parks – address changing needs of urban areas, increase park activation efforts, and upgrade infrastructure
- Acquisitions – focus on urban parks, high density areas, and natural resource-based recreation
- Project Delivery – focus on phased, targeted and timely renovations and new construction
- Facility Planning – focus on smaller projects and studies over full scale projects
- Additional criteria and needs that help identify the most important renovations/repurposing projects and new park facilities are discussed throughout this Plan in the appropriate chapters.

CIP FUNDING

Once proposed projects are prioritized, they are assigned timing and funding within the six year CIP from the pool of available resources. Limits on available CIP funding include:

- Overall Fiscal Capacity
 - Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG)
 - SAG limits on Park and Planning Bonds
 - SAG limits on County Bonds
 - Limits on other available funding sources (State Program Open Space, other federal grants, contributions, Enterprise funds)
- Implementation Capability – constrained by limited resources and staff
- Balancing Priorities – new priorities vs. backlog of unfulfilled needs
- Operating Budget Impact – certain projects may require significant OBI and thus be not feasible to fund given operating budget constraints

The approved CIP for FY17-22 includes \$185 Million for all projects over 6 years, including renovation, development and acquisition. The figures below illustrate the various funding sources and the balance between renovations, new parks & facilities, and land acquisition. Note that although the CIP appears to allocate on a small portion towards Environmental Stewardship and Historic & Cultural Stewardship (4% each), these percentages only reflect the projects within the CIP that are dedicated solely to stewardship efforts (such as the Stream Restoration and the Restoration of Historic Structures projects). Every project within the entire CIP include elements of environmental and cultural stewardship during the implementation of construction projects and acquisitions.

County and Commission Bonds fund 60% of the CIP, and County Current Revenue provides another 12% of the six-year budget. State Program Open Space dollars are estimated to fund 12% of the total CIP over the next 6 years. Although POS dollars are a smaller portion of the CIP than the local bond funds, these state-provided funds are critical to supporting the necessary development and acquisition efforts of the Commission to provide parks, recreation and open space resources to the residents of the County.

M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks 2107 PROS Plan - Public Hearing Draft
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Figure 8 - FY17-FY22 CIP by Funding Source

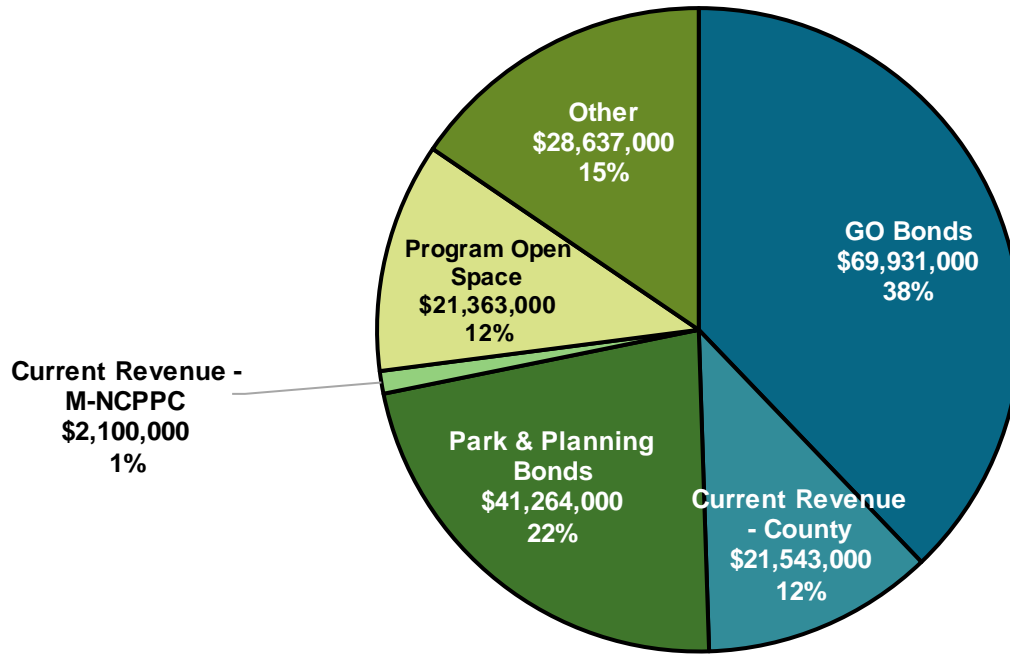
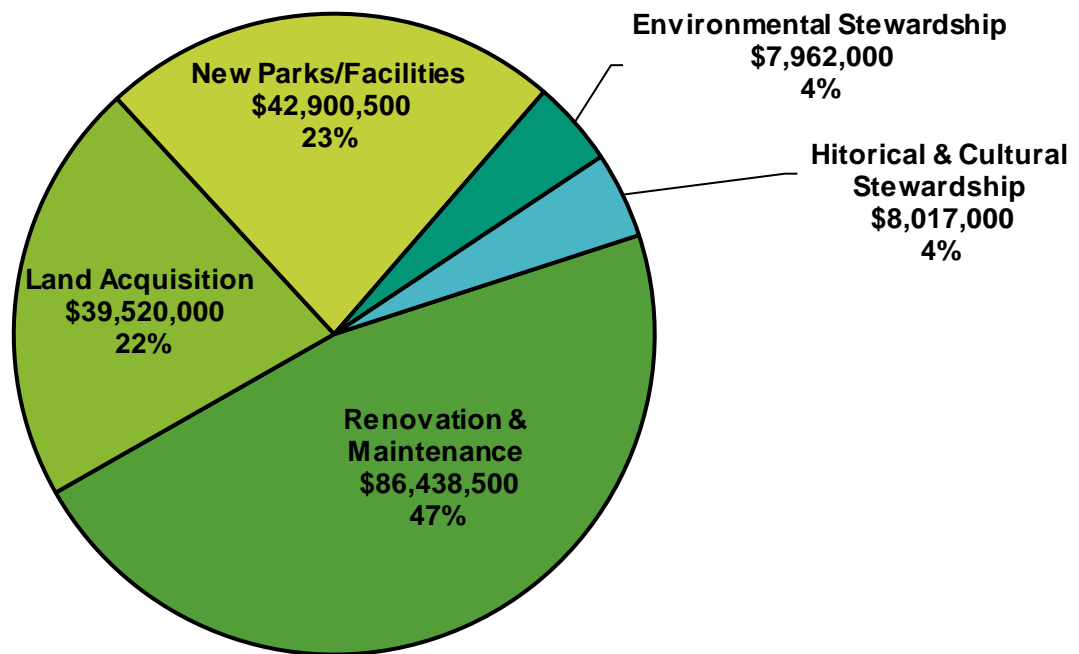


Figure 9 - FY17-22 CIP by Expenditure Category



Land Acquisition Program

Where renovating and repurposing developed parkland and developing additional parkland cannot meet the needs for recreation in the County, land acquisition must be pursued. Parks will face increasing demands for new urban parks, recreation facilities and green open spaces as the population of Montgomery County grows and changes. In addition to addressing relatively predictable 20-year needs for parkland via this PROS plan and master plans, the projected continuation of population trends increases the far long-term need for parkland to serve the County. Over the past 90 years, the acquisition program has successfully provided a balanced park system through acquisition of land for facility-based and resource-based recreation and for natural and cultural stewardship. The land acquisition program is critical to maintaining the quality of life that the County's residents and businesses have come to expect.

New land is added to the park system through three main avenues: dedication through the land development process, direct purchase using CIP funds, and the occasional donation of land by property owners. The direct acquisition program is structured in four Level-of-Effort projects in the County Capital Improvement Program (CIP), each briefly described below, plus one new proposed project. Different funding sources are appropriated to each of these CIP projects to finance different types of land acquisition. Just as for Park construction projects, land for acquisition must be identified, prioritized, and then acquired using a variety of means.

IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION

When acquisition of additional parkland is determined to be necessary to meet park and recreation goals, potential acquisition sites go through a similar but not identical selection and prioritization process to development-oriented CIP projects. Land acquisition needs are established in area master/sector plans, park master plans, this PROS Plan, the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan, and other park studies and plans. Community proposals, Planning Board or other policy maker input, and unexpected opportunities for acquisition also contribute to determining park acquisitions outside of a more formal planning process.

Current plans indicate 6546.63 acres of specifically identified Proposed Parkland throughout the County. These sites are identified and tracked as "Proposed Parkland" in the Commission's Geographic Information System (GIS) database. Additional proposed parkland is identified more broadly via target areas and criteria that guide acquisition in policies and plans.

General criteria that help to identify and prioritize properties for acquisition include the following:

- Identified need for a specific property based on location, unique potential for providing critical facilities, or for preservation of natural or cultural resources
- Identified site that is threatened by loss to development
- Sites essential to management and operation of existing parks
- Opportunities to expand existing parks
- Removal of private in-holdings surrounded by existing parkland
- Opportunities to improve access to existing parks

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- Land to better accommodate construction of facilities in new or existing parks
- Sites with capacity to reduce PROS Plan unmet needs

More specific criteria for identifying and prioritizing land for acquisition to meet different park, resource, and recreation needs are discussed in each chapter of this plan.

ACQUISITION PROGRAM FUNDING

Montgomery County relies upon the State of Maryland Program Open Space (POS) grant program as a critical component of the funding structure for acquisitions. A significant portion of the M-NCPPC Montgomery County park system has been acquired using state POS funds since the program's inception in 1970. Of the total of \$176.7 million in POS grant payments received, half has been allocated to purchase parkland while half was used for facility development. In addition to State POS funding, Montgomery County General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds and M-NCPPC G.O. Bonds (aka Commission or Park and Planning Bonds) are issued by the controlling agency and provided to acquisition CIP projects. For certain types of acquisition expenses and in strong economic times, County Current Receipts are also provided to the acquisition CIP.

The intent of having multiple funding sources supporting the overall park acquisition CIP is to provide a steady, predictable funding stream over multiple years to provide adequate funds to keep pace with increasing demands for parkland. However, budget constraints over the past decade have resulted in high variability in certain funding sources and overall significant reductions to the aggregate level of CIP funding for land acquisition. State POS funding has varied significantly over the past decade because of fluctuations in the real estate market and state government policy decisions, resulting in much lower funding levels over the past 5 years than the previous decade. Economic impacts on County and Commission funding sources have similarly reduced the level of bond funds that can be issued, and cash flows (current receipts) have been much lower than during the first decade of the 2000's.

This lack of available funds combined with increasing property values has reduced the purchasing power of the total acquisition program, significantly reducing the ability to acquire parkland. The acquisition budget comprises approximately 22% of the entire Parks CIP (FY17-22).

Creating needed new parks in developing and urban areas can be especially challenging in tight budget times, so staff already are using a variety of new and existing tools to implement proposed new urban parks, whether in master plan or functional plan recommendations. When dedication is not an option and parkland acquisition is necessary, staff will use a variety of tools to make expensive acquisitions more feasible, such as negotiating installment contracts to stretch current funding, seeking additional funding sources, and requesting supplemental appropriations when necessary for significant urban acquisitions.

ACQUISITION PROGRAM STRUCTURE

ACQUISITION VIA DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The development of land within the County often results in recreational and stewardship land being transferred to park ownership. The amount of land conveyed to Parks through the development review process varies with the zoning requirements, area master/sector plan recommendations, the size and quality of natural resources on the land being developed, and recreation and open space needs related

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to the new development. Designation of a site in a functional master plan such as Legacy Open Space may also result in dedication of appropriate parkland.

Significant areas of the stream valley park system and other elements of the park system have been acquired through the development process over the previous decades. It is estimated that 15% (or 5,500 acres) of the current park system has been added through the dedication process.

To address the challenges of providing parks in our most populated communities (urban, mixed use and the most densely populated residential neighborhoods), innovative zoning tools are being written to create opportunities for dedication of necessary park spaces in our expanding urban areas. However, these innovative zoning and density transfer tools will not be adequate on their own to provide for the civic greens and other urban open spaces necessary for our increasingly dense core communities. Adequate acquisition funding will be necessary to meet these new and unique needs.

NON-LOCAL PARK ACQUISITION

The Non-Local Park Acquisition Program funds the acquisition of parkland that serves residents on a County-wide basis. Regional, Recreational, Conservation, Special and Stream Valley Parks are examples of the types of parks funded through this program. Due to their county-wide significance, Non-Local Parks are acquired by and titled to the Montgomery County, but are operated and managed by the Commission as part of the park system. The Non-Local Park CIP project is primarily funded by State Program Open Space (POS) funds with a small amount of County funds allocated to fund program expenses.

The Non-Local Park Acquisition CIP Budget has a total appropriation of \$1,135,000 in FY17. Of the current FY17 Non-Local Park appropriation, \$1,000,000 is being funded by Program Open Space (POS) grants for land acquisition and \$135,000 is being funded by County Current Receipts for staff salary chargebacks and other acquisition-related expenses (appraisals, surveys).

LOCAL PARK ACQUISITION

The Local Park Acquisition Program funds the acquisition of parkland that serves County residents on a neighborhood or community basis. Urban, Local, and Neighborhood park types are examples of the parks funded through this program. These parks are generally in walking distance from intended users or are facilities that can be reached via a short drive. Local Parks are acquired by and titled to the Commission. The Local Park CIP project is primarily funded by State Program Open Space (POS) funds with a small amount of County funds allocated to fund program expenses.

The Local Park Acquisition Program has a total appropriation of \$1,035,000 in FY17. Of the FY-17 Local Park appropriation, \$1,000,000 is being funded by Program Open Space (POS) grants for land acquisition and \$35,000 is being funded by Park and Planning Bonds for staff salary chargebacks and other acquisition-related expenses (appraisals, surveys).

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LEGACY OPEN SPACE FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN

The Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (M-NCPPC 2001), adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board and Montgomery County Council, established a program to preserve the best remaining open spaces across the County in six different categories:

- Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resources
- Water Supply Protection
- Heritage Resources
- Greenway Connections
- Farmland and Rural Open Space
- Urban Open Spaces

The Legacy Open Space (LOS) plan contains criteria for evaluating properties for designation and envisions using a variety of tools to protect open space in the County. The two primary tools used are to protect resources through the development review process and to purchase resources as new parkland. Certain Legacy Open Space-designated properties are recommended for acquisition because they “rise above the rest” due to their exceptional recreational, historic, natural or cultural value.

The Legacy Open Space Acquisition CIP project funds acquisition to protect a variety of open space resources, including many park types geographically located to serve residents across the County. This CIP project is primarily funded by County General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds and M-NCPPC G.O. Bonds. The Legacy Open Space CIP only rarely includes State POS funding in years of unusually high POS allocations. Additional funds from contributions from partner municipalities and State special funds are also included in this CIP project.

In FY17 the Legacy Open Space Program has a budget of \$3,250,000. Of the FY15 Legacy Open Space appropriation, \$2,500,000 is being funded by County Bonds, \$500,000 is being funded by Commission Bonds, and \$250,000 is being funded by County Current Receipts.

ADVANCE LAND ACQUISITION REVOLVING FUND (ALARF)

The ALARF Program can be used to acquire property that has been designated on master plans for public uses such as rights-of-way for roads and streets, school sites, library sites, recreation center sites, other government buildings, etc., when money is not available from other fund sources. Importantly, ALARF may also be used to acquire parkland. This CIP project is a revolving fund source that, except for parkland purchases, will be reimbursed when the property is transferred to the appropriate agency to be used for its intended purpose. At the time of transfer, the Commission is paid its cost to purchase plus interest.

The Commission has broad discretion in using ALARF for land acquisitions within two primary constraints:

- The proposed acquisition must be shown on the Commission’s General Plan or another adopted master or sector plan.
- The County Council must approve each ALARF purchase by resolution.

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The ALARF CIP is funded with three main sources. Reimbursement from other agencies for prior land purchases can provide a significant amount of funding, but not on a predictable schedule. Interest earned on the fund balance can also contribute measurable funds during a period when significant reimbursements have occurred. When the ALARF balance drops below a certain level, approximately \$2.0 Million, special ALARF Commission Bonds are issued to create an adequate fund balance to be able to pay for time-sensitive acquisitions.

As of April, 2017 ALARF has an available cash balance of \$9,911,853 resulting from reimbursement for several prior ALARF acquisitions.

PROPOSED: ENERGIZED PUBLIC SPACES FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN

A new functional master plan is in development to create a more data driven and analytical approach to identifying necessary park facilities and land in the County's most dense residential neighborhoods and mixed use communities. (For more detail, see *CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation*). The Energized Public Spaces plan will result in a new method for identifying park needs in parts of the County where most growth is occurring, and will recommend sites for renovation, new development, partnerships, and new park acquisition to meet recreation and open space needs. This functional master plan is expected to be completed on a timeline to allow request of a new CIP acquisition project during the coming biennial CIP cycle, FY19-FY24.

Creating needed new parks in these developing and urban areas can be challenging, so staff already are using a variety of new and existing tools to implement proposed new urban parks, whether master plan or functional plan recommendations. To increase the likelihood of receiving parks in dedication, innovative zoning tools are being developed in plans currently underway. When dedication is not an option and parkland acquisition is necessary, staff will use a variety of tools to make expensive acquisitions more feasible, such as negotiating installment contracts to stretch current funding, seeking additional funding sources, and requesting supplemental appropriations when necessary for significant urban acquisitions.

Maintaining funding sources like Legacy Open Space and the Local and Non-Local Acquisition programs funded by Program Open Space is a key element of ensuring we can purchase and preserve open spaces in our growing areas. However, to acquire necessary parkland in many of the most expensive areas of the County, additional funding dedicated to that purpose will be necessary to implement the goals of this new FMP and existing goals for parks in our most dense communities.

CHAPTER 3 - Optimizing Growth with Urban Parks

Introduction

NEED FOR URBAN PARKS

Around 80% of Americans live in cities (2010 Census). In Montgomery County, 97.6% of the population lives in urban areas (2010 Census), primarily along I-270 and inside the Beltway (I-495). The forecasted patterns of growth (2010-2045) will be concentrated along I-270, representing only 14% of the County's land, but 72% of the population and 82% of employment. With the scarcity of developable land and the increase in density in urban areas, park planning has become more critical to creating livable and healthy communities. The trend in real estate development is to replace lower density residential development with higher density residential and mixed use buildings. The significant increase in density makes parks and open space areas the "outdoor living rooms" for many of these new communities. Without space for large private backyards, public parks and trails play an increasingly important role in improving public health and promoting social interaction and equity. Access to urban parks is a critical and necessary element of achieving one of the primary County's goals, to promote community welfare and quality of life.

THE PARK SYSTEM'S RESPONSE TO SOCIETAL CHANGES

Since its inception, Montgomery County's park system has been responding to the needs of its community with a variety of park experiences and services. Each phase of the development of park system over time reflects the needs, lifestyle and predominant development pattern at that time. When the park system was created in the 1920's and 1930's the emphasis was on water supply protection. After World War II and into the 1950's, organized recreation in park activity buildings, ballfields, and tennis courts were the priorities. The 1960's and 1970's brought a suburban growth pattern of larger lots of single-family homes with backyards grouped by residents with similar income and social structure. This development pattern encouraged the use and dependency on car to access any destination.

In the late 60's and 70's, environmental policy started taking shape with a better understanding of the impact of suburban sprawl. Growth management policies started emerging. The *On Wedges and Corridors (1964) Plan* took place, concentrating development along corridors and centers in and around the Beltway (I-495). The introduction of the Agricultural Reserve as a land conservation policy preserved our farmland, and encouraged the shift toward "growing smarter", and preserving access to farmland and open spaces.

Initially, urban parks were created as buffers to protect suburban residential development from commercial areas. Now that people are moving to the commercial centers, parks and open spaces are needed inside the more urban areas so that people have nearby places to gather, play, or be in touch with the outdoors.

TODAY'S CHALLENGES

As housing moves inside the commercial centers, the biggest challenge is to provide adequate parks and open spaces where land is already developed and very expensive. The need to focus on urban parks in these growing areas was established in the *Urban Parks Guidelines*, *Vision 2030* and *2012 PROS*.

With the increase in competition for land, our parks and open spaces should accommodate multiple needs. Integrating parks and recreation areas with other services can reduce costs by providing local amenities within walking distance, reducing impervious surfaces and recharging groundwater supply, and removing pollutants from water. Sustainability requires integration of efforts and preventive measures to avoid waste of resources. This is especially critical in urban areas where high density puts a strain on failing infrastructure. The comprehensive integration of land uses, including parkland, will require a level of coordination among the different agencies including alignment of objectives, development schedules, and dedicated funds.

In areas with more people and jobs, parks are now much more than a leisure amenity -- they provide a platform for a diversity of community experiences. Urban parks provide many direct and indirect benefits to the lifestyle of residents, employees and visitors.

ALIGNMENT WITH DEPARTMENT OF PARKS VALUES

Parks in areas of high density can be incubators for health – physical, mental, and social. Urban Parks provide opportunities to promote many of the values and strategies of the Department of Parks, including:

- **Healthy Living** – Physical activity reduces and can prevent chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity while reducing anxiety and depression. Having a system of parks within mixed use centers encourages people use parks more frequently for exercise. With a well-designed system of trails and sidewalks, people will tend to walk and bike rather than drive.
- **Stewardship & Recreation** – with many families choosing to live in urban areas, the first contact with nature and outdoor play for many children is through their neighborhood parks. Urban Parks can help plant the seed for stewardship of nature for those who live in higher density developments with no backyards.
- **Natural, Historical and Archaeological Resources** – Although much of the County's inventory of natural, historical, and archaeological resources are outside urban areas, urban parks can provide "pilot" places to experience and appreciate them.
- **Economic Competitiveness** – healthier communities attract businesses and residents, and access to parks is one critical element of a healthy community. Parks increase property values from 5-20%. Parks also lower the cost of infrastructure by managing stormwater and preventing flooding. By promoting walking to parks and maintaining a healthy weight, communities can save \$1,500 per person in healthcare costs a year.
- **Social Equity** – Access to parks is critical to healthy living. In areas of higher density with little open space, proximity to parks is especially important. In lower income areas where residents

depend on public transit to access park facilities, the public sector should prioritize parks within walking distance. Currently, one third of the County's population is foreign-born. This diversity should guide the services and facilities so that the parks provide public space that is inviting to all.

Implementation

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2012 PROS: A SYSTEM AND A HIERARCHY

A System

The *2012 PROS Plan* recommended that for each urban area, a unique open space system should be planned to serve the projected demographics of residents, workers, and visitors. The urban design vision developed during the master plan or sector plan process for the area helped guide the amount, pattern, location, siting, and design of open spaces.

The type and pattern of parks and open spaces best suited to urban populations is different from the suburban model of large tracts of land filled with fixed, single-use facilities. PROS Plans in the past projected recreational needs by broad planning areas, rather than by small sub-areas such as the new transit-oriented neighborhoods being created in Montgomery County. The *2012 PROS Plan* recognized that urban areas change the way in which we provide, build, and manage park and recreation resources in those areas. There are distinct challenges, the potential to provide park and recreation resources in different ways and different opportunities to incorporate and create those resources as urbanizing areas redevelop. The *2012 PROS Plan* recommended a system of parks and open spaces at the core of every urban area, provided through a combination of public and private efforts. The new open space system should support a vibrant and sustainable urban center by including open spaces that will be comfortable, attractive, easily accessible, safe, and provide a range of experiences, up to and including festival and outdoor event spaces. Those open spaces that rise to the level of serving as a focal point of community life for the planning area are typically recommended to be publicly owned and managed parks, while those open spaces serving a smaller district, neighborhood, or block are often recommended as public use spaces owned or managed by the private sector.

The *2012 PROS Plan* recommended that every urban area should have a system of parks and open spaces that include the following attributes:

- Active recreation - places to exercise outdoors, alone or in groups
- Social interaction - comfortable seating areas, large public spaces for formal or informal gathering, community gardens
- Access to green space - ample areas of grass, trees, and other landscaping
- Relaxation and stress relief - areas away from traffic and urban noise
- Public accessibility - where anyone can gather or sit or talk
- Educational experiences - programs to learn from nature or cultural/historic resources

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- Walkability - every residence should have a park or open space within 1/8 mile. Major roads can be barriers that add to the walking time and must be calculated into the minimum distance formula
- Connectivity - walking and biking systems to link all proposed urban open spaces, and to provide pleasant walking routes from residences and businesses to open space destinations throughout the planning area, and to connect to regional trail and bikeway systems
- Flexibility - space that can be used for a variety of spontaneous activities and gatherings, and to respond to the changing needs of urban populations
- Activating Uses –nearby shops, restaurants, and residences, attractions, entertainment, as well as places within the park for relaxation, getting work done (Wi-Fi), spontaneous play, education, recreation, etc.

A Hierarchy

The *2012 PROS Plan* recommended and this plan confirms that each area master plan should include a system of open spaces based on the roles of each type of open space. The amount and size of open spaces may vary from plan to plan and should be directly proportional to the projected density, and adjusted to the pattern of existing open space and other factors such as community-specific needs.

The following hierarchy should be applied to any new urbanizing area:

For the Sector Plan Area:

- active recreation destinations located within or near the plan area, including courts, playgrounds, and lawn areas large enough for pick up soccer, festivals or events, etc.
- a central “civic green” urban park (Chapter 3), ranging in size from ½ to 2 acres, depending on projected densities, located in close proximity to a public transit hub, next to activating uses, with a mixture of hard and soft surfaces including a central lawn area for events
- an interconnected system of sidewalks and trails to connect parks and open spaces
- wooded areas that will provide a sense of contact with nature

For each Urban Neighborhood:

- a neighborhood green, urban buffer park, or community use recreational park

For each Block:

- an urban square, plaza, or green area

For each Building:

- outdoor recreation space

For each Residence:

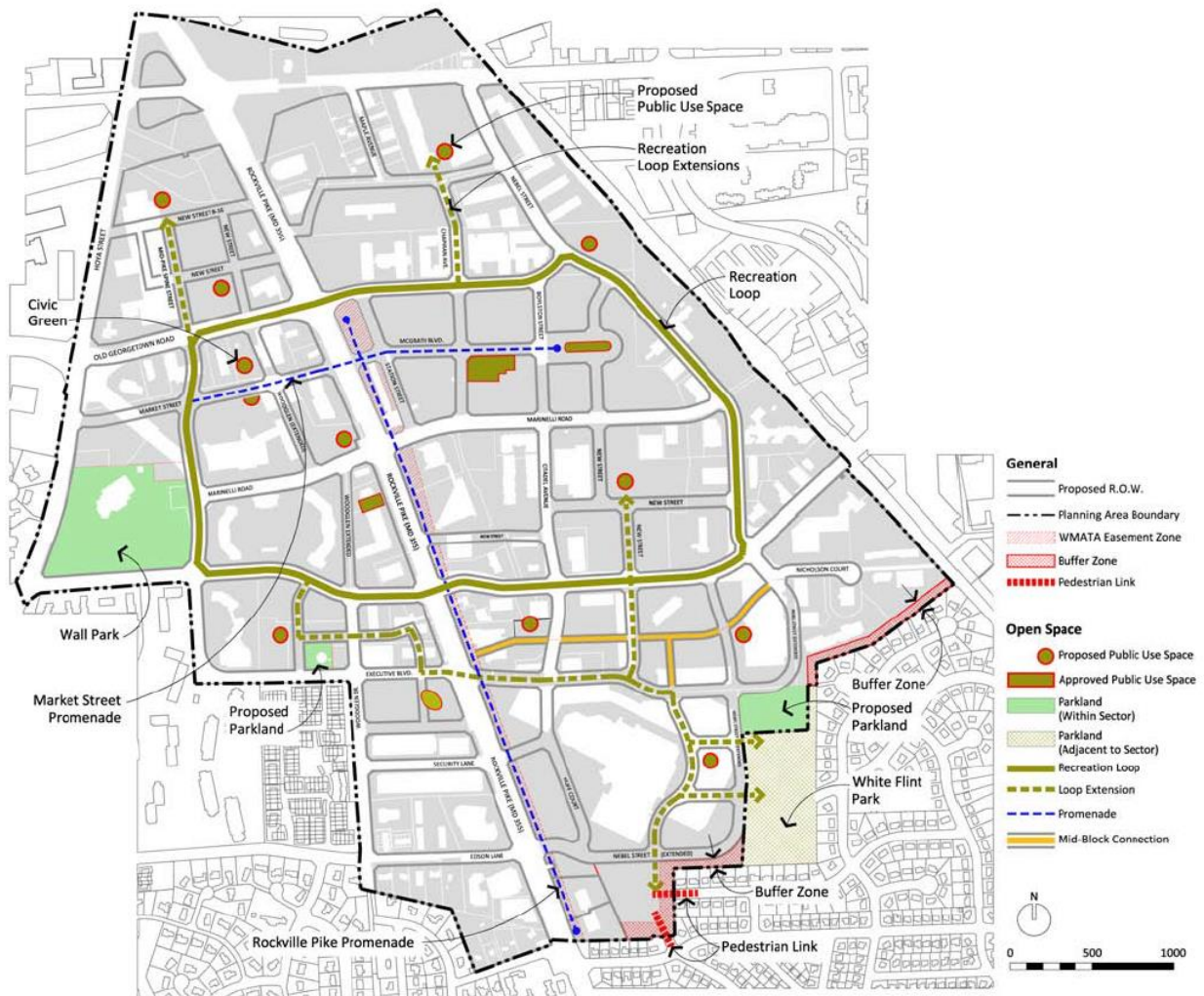
- private outdoor space

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An example of a hierarchy for parks and open spaces from the approved and adopted White Flint Sector Plan (2010) is shown in Figure 10 - Map 9 Public Use Space Plan. - White Flint Sector Plan (April 2010).below.

Figure 10 - Map 9 Public Use Space Plan. - White Flint Sector Plan (April 2010).



Status of 2012 PROS Recommendations

PARK RECOMMENDATIONS IN AREA MASTER AND SECTOR PLANS

A series of County Council adopted master and sector plans have applied the system and hierarchy of open spaces proposed in the *2012 PROS Plan*, to recommend over 30 new or expanded parks (to be either privately or publicly owned) including:

- February, 2017 – *Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan* - 7 new or expanded parks
- July, 2016 – *Westbard Sector Plan* – 4 new parks
- 2014 – *White Oak Science Gateway Plan* – 5 new or expanded parks
- November, 2013 – *Glenmont Sector Plan*– 5 new or expanded parks
- November, 2013 – *Long Branch Sector Plan* – 5 new or expanded parks
- October, 2013 – *Chevy Chase Lakes Sector Plan* – 2 new parks
- December, 2012 – *Burtonsville Crossroads Neighborhood Plan* – 2 new parks
- June, 2012 – *Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan* – 2 new or expanded parks

ACTIVATION PROJECTS “POP UP” IN MONTGOMERY PARKS

During 2016 Montgomery Parks instituted a new program for park activation. Its mission is to “get people into the parks,” and its vision is for all Montgomery County residents to choose park activities during their leisure time, and to ultimately promote self-directed activation of parks.

In 2014, the Parks Leadership Program assigned a core group of program participants the project of developing an activating parks program. Initial activities included Touch a Truck Event, Sharks in the Parks (Discovery Channel Shark week film), Butterfly Garden and Chalk Day. In addition, amenities were installed in various parks to increase activity which included movable tables and chairs, heart smart trail, chess, ping pong and shuffle board.

In 2015, grill nights were held each month during the summer which included live music, large grill for people to grill their own food and a camp fire to make s’mores.

In 2016, a large scrabble board was set up in two parks to promote National Scrabble Day. Giant Jenga games were dropped off in ten parks for park patrons to enjoy. A giant chess set was made available for check out at a local library for use in a park. Free lunch time massages were scheduled in late summer. Bollywood dancing and Tai Chi demonstrations were held in two parks. Food trucks were a trial event at one park. Tree climbing for kids was coordinated by the Parks tree crews. Large amenities purchased for use in parks included a portable climbing wall and a pump track.

In September of 2016, an Activating Parks Program Coordinator was hired to oversee and expand the existing program. Additional staffing includes the hiring of play specialists to support and assist with children and families leading them and encouraging them to play in parks.

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Programs and activities will be developed for four seasons to promote park use year-round. The coordinator has developed and initiated a winter schedule of activities which include scheduling at various parks, the pump track and climbing wall, Pop -up Recess, Movie Night in the Park, Community Cozy Day (fire pit, s'mores and hot chocolate), evening fire circles.

NEW AND REDEVELOPED URBAN PARKS SINCE 2012

Below is a list of the major urban parks projects that have completed milestones since 2012, including several park renovations/upgrades and two newly constructed parks.

Renovated and Updated Parks

Kemp Mill Urban Park

- Design completed May 2015
- Construction to be completed in Summer 2017

Woodside Urban Park

- Design to be completed in early 2017
- Construction to begin in Summer 2017 with estimated completion in 2019

Caroline Freeland Urban Park

- Facility plan completed July 2015
- Design programmed to begin in July 2018
- Construction programmed for 2020-2021

Battery Lane Urban Park

- Tennis courts renovated in 2016
- Playground renovation scheduled for 2017-2018

Ellsworth Urban Park – Pilot Urban Dog Park

- Site Selection completed April 2014
- Design completed September 2015
- Construction completed June 2016

Wall Local Park

- Interim park plan
- Design completed Feb 2017
- Construction programmed for 2018-2019

Newly Constructed Parks

Germantown Town Center Urban Park

- Design completed April 2012
- Construction completed in Fall 2015

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Western Grove Urban Park

- Facility plan completed September 2013
- Design completed February 2016
- Construction to be completed in Spring 2017

PARK ACQUISITIONS

Since the 2012 PROS Plan, several acquisitions of new parkland have been completed in areas that serve the County's most populated communities. Here are a few examples.

Glenfield Local Park Expansion

- Recommended in the Glenmont Sector Plan, 2013
- Acquired 3.4 acres of forest to provide natural resource recreation opportunities near Metro

Santini Road Local Park

- Recommended in the Burtonsville Neighborhood Plan, 2012
- Acquired 15.7 acres to provide future local park to serve expanding Burtonsville neighborhoods

Patuxent River Conservation Park Expansion

- Recommended in the Burtonsville Neighborhood Plan, 2012
- Acquired 36.5 acres of forest to provide natural resource recreation opportunities

Piedmont Crossing Local Park

- Recommended in the Shady Grove Sector Plan, 2006
- Acquired 22.9 acres to provide future local park to serve new residential communities transforming the Shady Grove Metro station area

URBAN PARK GUIDELINES OBJECTIVES

In June of 2010, the Planning Board approved objectives for *Urban Park Guidelines*. The goal of the *Urban Park Guidelines* was to re-examine and re-define the role of urban parks in community life. The *2012 PROS Plan* responded to three of the objectives approved by the Board in 2010, and progress to date is summarized below:

Objective 1: Define a new (third) park category in the classification system called Urban Parks. This was achieved in the 2012 PROS Plan by adding 6 new types of urban parks to the Park Classification System. The new categories and subcategories and their descriptions support the vision and role of urban parks to serve mixed-use, densely developing communities. Several of these park types are found in all sector plans approved since 2012.

Objective 2: Propose a standard amount of public parkland for community master plan areas, based on projected future population in the plan area. In 2010 the Board agreed that the amount of parkland alone will not guarantee “the right parks in the right places” in our urban areas. Urban park recommendations since 2012 have been based primarily on creating the right pattern and type of parks and open spaces for each master or sector plan area, rather than setting a target for the amount of parkland.

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Objective 3: Propose a methodology for distributing parkland across a community master plan area.

The Board agreed in 2010 that in order to distribute parkland appropriately within an urban area, the recommendations for parks in each urban area should help meet needs identified in the *2012 PROS Plan*, including new, urban park facilities such as event spaces, skate spots, etc, and create a walkable open space system, using a standard maximum walking distance from residences and transit stops to parks.

The *2012 PROS Plan* established a new methodology for distribution, which has been applied to every sector plan since 2012, by including:

- New park facility types that are appropriate in urban areas in needs estimates and service delivery strategies, e.g. civic greens, community open space, urban woodlands, community gardens, dog parks, and skate parks
- A system with specific attributes to meet needs of urban residents
- A hierarchy of parks and open spaces with relative service areas to avoid gaps in service
- A maximum walking distance to urban parks and open spaces

Recommendations

ENERGIZED PUBLIC SPACES FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN (EPS FMP)

Since the *2012 PROS Plan* approval, sector and master plans have been implementing the three objectives listed above. In August 2016, Montgomery Parks initiated a new plan for parks in higher density areas called the *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS FMP)*.

The main purpose of the *EPS FMP* is to create outdoor spaces where people of all ages and incomes can meet, play, relax, exercise and enjoy nature and more, in a range of parks and public spaces within specific geographic areas. The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation (M-NCPPC 2010)* confirmed that the highest needs are and will continue to be in areas of highest population density.

Study Area

The *EPS Functional Master Plan* seeks locations for new open spaces in areas traditionally underserved by M-NCPPC parks. Historically, parks were located where people lived, outside of the commercial areas. M-NCPPC parkland acted as buffers between commercial and residential communities. With increased mixed-use development and the arrival of new residents to commercial and employment areas, Montgomery Parks seeks to meet the increasing demand for parks and open space to serve both residents and the day-time population.

The study area mapped for the *EPS Functional Master Plan* identifies areas in Montgomery County that are:

Higher-intensity Mixed Use Areas (commercial and residential)

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Areas that are “higher-intensity mixed use” are defined as being areas with both moderate residential density and that are also employment centers. These areas have a both a residential population density of 5,000 people per square mile and a ratio of employees to residents that is 1:1 or higher.

Higher Density Residential

To also provide greater service to areas in the county with the highest residential density, those areas were also added to the study area map and are defined as having 10,000 residents per square mile or higher.

Data from the Planning Department’s Round 9.0 Forecast was used to create the study areas and includes current (2010) and future (2045) conditions. In addition, the Study Area also aligns with on-going regional and local planning efforts areas: activity centers from the Council of Governments, public transit routes and stations, and recent master and sector plans completed by the Planning Department.

Methodology

Within the Study Area, the Plan methodology will identify priorities for renovation of existing parks, opportunities for partnering with other entities to provide service, and recommendations for acquisition and development of new parks. Review and approval of this functional master plan by the County Council will result in a legally robust plan that can support a wide variety of implementation tools, including dedication through the development process and the land acquisition process. As an approved functional master plan, this Plan also will provide the ability to study priority areas of the County and make new park recommendations without being tied to the land use master plan schedule.

In summary, *the Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan for Parks in Mixed Use & Higher Density Residential Areas (EPS FMP)* will:

- Identify where parks are needed most to serve dense populations
- Propose funding sources to purchase new parkland
- Prioritize which parks to fund
- Provide a method to evaluate the success of parks that serve the needs of these unique areas
- This Plan will develop a methodology that can be employed systematically across the County thereby ensuring equity in parks and opens spaces within the study area. The *EPS FMP* will be organized as follows:

IDENTIFYING SERVICE GAPS

- A New Methodology for Parks Serving Mixed Use & Higher Density
- Evaluation of Public Parks
- Service Gap Findings for Study Area

FINDING SOLUTIONS

- Level of Service Indicators

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- Opportunities to Fill Gaps
- Evaluate & Prioritize Opportunities
- Pilot Program
 - Find Solutions for Pilot Area
 - Evaluate & Prioritize Opportunities in Pilot Area

IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTIONS

- Implement Solutions with Innovative Tools
 - Partnerships for Operations & Activation
 - Public, Private and Partnership Ownership Options
- Pilot Program: Identify Potential Implementation Tools for Pilot Area

Proposed CIP Funding

To successfully implement the recommendations of this plan, staff will request critical funding in the FY19-24 CIP process to address two needs: design and engineering funds to support renovations and new development, and acquisition funds to support necessary new parkland in the County's most dense and mixed use areas. This funding may be requested in two new level-of-effort projects within the CIP (one for Acquisition and one for Facility Planning), or may be requested as new funding within existing acquisition and facility planning projects. Final design and construction funds for major park renovations and new construction of these important parks will be funded through the CIP as Facility Planning is completed, as is done for other major park projects.

REVISION TO THE PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The *2017 PROS Plan* proposes a revision of the Parks Classification System to include two additional subcategories of urban parks: plaza and pocket green, under the two existing categories of urban parks: Countywide and Community Use respectively. Since the approval of six new types of urban parks in the *2012 PROS Plan*, a need has been identified for two different types of urban parks with distinctly different roles—plazas, and pocket greens. The proposed subcategories definitions and descriptions are listed in (*Figure 7 - Proposed Update to the Park Type Summary Chart*).

CHAPTER 4 – Parks and Recreation

Introduction

Chapter 4 includes state and local goals for recreation and parks, the current County implementation programs for achieving these goals, progress since the *2012 PROS Plan*, new recommendations based on an analysis of supply, demand and need for recreation facilities, and priorities for land acquisition, development and renovation.

The overall goal is to balance facility based recreation, resource based recreation, natural resource and cultural resource stewardship offerings to serve a diverse population.

Goals

STATE GOALS

The following State goals for recreation and parks are used in Planning for Parks and Recreation, in addition to other local goals:

- Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.
- Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the state more desirable places to live, work and visit.
- Use State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.
- To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.
- Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.
- Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.

LOCAL GOALS

The *Vision 2030 Executive Summary* provides the County's local goals for the planning and development of recreation and parks. These are listed as Goals 4-8 under the theme of Planning and Development: Planning for recreational, natural, and cultural resources in an urbanizing County.

GOAL 4 – Provide adequate and appropriate public lands and facilities that are equitably distributed across the County to meet the needs of residents.

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GOAL 5 – Create a high-functioning system of Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space that is responsive to changing community needs and interests.

GOAL 6 – Expand and enhance opportunities for recreational trail experiences to promote health and wellness.

GOAL 8– Provide an equitable distribution of public indoor recreation spaces in Montgomery County that is sustainable.

Implementation

This section describes County programs and procedures for recreation, parks, and related open space.

COMMUNITY MASTER PLANS

Community master plans and sector plans continually update the County’s Comprehensive Plan and provide an important vehicle for implementation of park plan proposals. During the community master planning process, needs for future public facilities, including parks, are given careful consideration. The importance of protecting significant historic, cultural and natural areas such as stream valleys is also identified and incorporated into land acquisition proposals and included in community master plans.

PARK MASTER PLANS

Park master plans are completed for all Countywide parks and facilitate implementation of the *2017 PROS Plan*. These plans help meet recreation needs while providing stewardship of the park’s natural and cultural resources.

PARK FUNCTIONAL PLANS

There are two types of Parks Functional Plans – Functional Master Plans that are approved and adopted by the County Council (e.g., Legacy Open Space, Energized Public Spaces). The second type deals with a specific type of facility countywide and is approved and adopted by the Planning Board (e.g., Countywide Park Trails Plan).

RECREATION FACILITY AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The *Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030* was created from the information gathered during the *Vision 2030* study. This information is utilized to guide the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) proposed every other year to recommend facility development, renovations, and other capital repair items. Once in the Countywide Facility Planning Montgomery County Project these efforts make their way into a standalone Project Description Form to be considered for funding in the areas of design, construction, development, etc.

The *2017 PROS Plan* provides revised population figures, acknowledges project completion schedules, and incorporates an extensive user needs assessment.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Acquisition and development of new parks through the subdivision process is an important method for meeting recreation and open space needs in an efficient manner with minimal impact on County taxpayers. Each subdivision plan for new development is reviewed with respect to park, trail, and recreation needs and considers the following factors when requesting conditions of approval on the development plans:

- The need for a park to serve the development as evidenced by the *2017 PROS Plan* or area master plan proposals
- The need for preservation of natural areas or historic and cultural sites
- The need for trails or access paths to existing or proposed parkland and to the County's regional trail and bikeway system
- The need to provide private recreation areas. The *Recreation Guidelines* approved by the Planning Board in 1992 and updated in 2017 require developers to provide privately developed and maintained recreation amenities for new residents as an important supplement to the public park and recreation system
- The need to contribute to open space, public benefits, and public amenities in areas zoned for high density mixed use development and maintained recreation amenities for new residents as an important supplement to the public park and recreation system
- The need to contribute to open space, public benefits, and public amenities in areas zoned for high density mixed use development

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP) PARK PROPOSALS

Facility Development Projects

The Capital Improvements Program implements the *PROS Plan* by providing funding for design and construction of recreation facilities identified in the *PROS Plan* and other policy documents that will not be provided through the development review process. Following the identification of park needs and specific site proposals in community and park master plans, individual park projects will be prioritized for inclusion in the six-year Capital Improvements Program (see *CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation* for prioritizing criteria and funding limitations of the CIP). Proposed projects will be prioritized first for facility planning and site design, and second for final design and construction. The CIP is submitted every two years and includes all development projects to be implemented within the following six years. See Appendix 2 for a list of the projects proposed in the current CIP cycle (FY17-FY22).

Acquisition of Parkland for Facility-Based Recreation

The CIP also funds the land acquisition program to create the necessary platforms for facilities (see Chapter 2 for details). When determining whether land acquisition is necessary or appropriate to meet

recreation needs, there are two criteria that need to be evaluated in addition to the general criteria in Chapter 2.

- Sites should have topography suitable for the desired facilities, including areas large enough for any desired athletic fields.
- Sites must have adequate land outside of Environmentally Sensitive Areas based on analysis using the Resource Atlas GIS tool (See *CHAPTER 5 - Natural Resources Stewardship*)

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES OR PRIVATE ENTITIES

Planning coordination with other agencies or jurisdictions is important in the implementation of the *PROS Plan*. Implementation of Plan proposals often will occur through partnerships with other public agencies or private organizations or groups. Recreation or natural or cultural resource preservation projects that are achieved cooperatively with another public agency or with private developers are increasingly important as areas of the County redevelop. Friends' groups and volunteers add significant resources to park facilities and programs.

FUNDING SOURCES

There are many funding sources and mechanisms the County uses to support the park and recreation programs. The Capital Improvements Program funds capital expenditures with a combination of County General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds, M-NCPPC G.O. Bonds (aka Park or Commission Bonds), Current Revenue and State Program Open Space grants. (See *CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation*, Balancing Renovation, Development and Acquisition.) The annual operating budget (including funding for park maintenance and renovations under \$30,000) is funded by a combination of Park Tax revenues, Enterprise facility revenues, and other grants and miscellaneous funding sources. Partnerships with other public agencies and private entities provide additional funds to support certain projects and programs. Finally, donations of real estate, in-kind services, cash or other assets via the Parks Foundation, and volunteer hours through the Volunteer Services Office all provide direct, tangible financial support to the parks and recreation facilities and programming.

Status of 2012 Recommendations

The Department of Parks has accomplished many of the recommendations in the *2012 PROS Plan*. These may be grouped according to the Local Goals as established in *Vision 2030*. The following repeats the goals and gives a summary of the progress on each.

GOAL 4 – Provide adequate and appropriate public lands and facilities that are equitably distributed across the County to meet the needs of residents. The Department continues to meet this goal by applying the service delivery strategies from the *2012 PROS Plan* that were based on prioritizing facilities where the lowest level of service per population exists.

The service delivery strategies are key factors in the recommendations for the Capital Improvements Program. In addition, alternative funding mechanisms for urban parks have been recommended in area master plans, designed to meet needs in high density areas where land is most expensive.

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Since January 1, 2012, M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks has acquired 1,566.23 +/- acres of parkland, and constructed and renovated numerous parks. Examples of renovation or construction of new parks with active facilities are as follows, by geography:

I-270 CORRIDOR:

- Laytonia Recreational Park – added lighted baseball field, lighted synthetic turf rectangular field, two natural turf rectangular fields, permitted shelter, playground, basketball court, paths, parking

POTOMAC SUBREGION:

- Greenbriar Local Park – added rectangular field, basketball court, playground, volleyball court, seating areas, parking, loop trail, picnic shelter

SILVER SPRING/TAKOMA PARK AREA:

- North Four Corners LP – added 1 rectangular field, fitness equipment, parking, plaza with seating, bikeway through park
- Ellsworth UP – added dog park
- Takoma Piney Branch LP – adds one playground, reduces two volleyball courts to one, adds new shelter, converts two tennis courts to a skateboard park, entrance plaza, renovates other facilities

EAST COUNTY AREA:

- Hillandale LP – removed park building and added picnic shelter

GEORGIA AVENUE AREA:

- Northwest Branch RP – added 1 baseball, 3 rectangular fields, 1 football field, parking
- East Norbeck LP – adds parking, natural surface trail, permitted picnic pavilion, expands and realigns fields so they do not overlap

RURAL AREA:

- Woodstock Equestrian Park – adds outdoor riding ring and cross country course, parking

GOAL 5 – Create a high-functioning system of Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space that is responsive to changing community needs and interests. The Department continues to meet this goal by streamlining funding, approval, design, and construction processes, designing and delivering more multi-use, flexible spaces, and accommodating trends through retrofitted or new development. Recommendations from area master plans and other community requests factor heavily in priorities for funding and construction.

Examples of accomplishments of this goal include:

- Programs of Requirement were developed for parks undergoing design or repurposing, to ensure that the design of the park responds to needs identified in the *2012 PROS Plan*, including Wheaton-Claridge Neighborhood Park, Caroline Freeland Urban Park, and Hillandale Local Park.

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- Plans and designs have included more un-programmed, flexible parks and recreation spaces, and features that are multi-functional or adaptable for multiple purposes, including Caroline Freeland Urban Park and Hillandale Local Park.
- Site selection studies identified sites for facilities in areas with service gaps, which were subsequently planned and designed, such as the County's first urban dog park in Ellsworth Urban Park, and the first purpose-built cricket field at South Germantown Recreational Park.
- A streamlined process for designing and delivering facilities resulted in a shorter turn-around time between planning and construction, in several projects including: Wheaton-Claridge Local Park, Long Branch Wayne Local Park, and Acorn Urban Park.

GOAL 6 – Expand and enhance opportunities for recreational trail experiences to promote health and wellness. The newly approved *2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan* Update prioritizes trails to fill gaps in the countywide system and will achieve a high level of service once the system is built out. When the trail system is fully built-out, in combination with bikeways, 85% of residents will be located within 1 mile, and nearly 100% will be located within 3 miles. Under both scenarios, 100% of residents are served within 5 miles.

We have constructed close to 30 miles of natural surface trail since 2012. Most notable trails include:

- Ten Mile Creek and Cool Spring Run trail in Black Hill Regional Park,
- Rachel Carson Greenway trail in Northwest Branch,
- North Branch Trail in the North Branch of Rock Creek,
- Hillandale Loop Trail in White Oak,
- The Upper Rock Creek trail and Carson Farm Trail at the Agricultural History Farm Park,
- The Diabase Trail in the Hoyles Mill Conservation Park,
- The new Tobacco Barn, Browning Run and Windy Ridge trails in Little Bennett Regional Park and the Silverwood Trail in Fairland Recreational Park.
- various trail reroutes in order to make other existing trails more sustainable and usable.

We also completed the following hard-surface trail projects:

- Matthew Henson Trail connector to Layhill Village LP
- Signage for 14 miles of the Rock Creek Trail
- Parklawn North Trail connection to Rock Creek Trail (almost completed)
- The trail connector from Matthew Henson to the Midcounty Recreation Center looks like it was funded in FY13, so it may be new since 2012.
- Trail connector from Sligo Creek Trail to Colt Terrace (funded in FY13).

CHAPTER 4 – Parks and Recreation

- We've renovated sections of the Rock Creek Trail, done shoulder work on the CCT, and done some additional trail renovations near the Carousel and Shorefield House in Wheaton RP.
- Facility planning completed for North Branch Trail and Little Bennett RP connection.
- Black Hill Trail is renovation project was 2.38 miles and the extension project was 1.2 miles.

GOAL 8– Provide an equitable distribution of public indoor recreation spaces in Montgomery County that is sustainable. The *Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan (RFDP), 2010-2030* was developed by the Recreation Department based on the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, with the goal to provide an equitable and sustainable distribution of public indoor recreation spaces in Montgomery County. In accordance with that plan, the Department has made significant progress in completing current planned facilities and renovations, while adding fewer, larger regional centers and combining them with indoor aquatics.

Recommendations

This section of the plan includes information on:

- Supply of parkland and recreation facilities to support specific recreational activities;
- Demand assessment and estimates for specific facility-based recreation and natural resource-based recreation activities;
- Needs determination of additional land and facilities through the year 2030 with service delivery strategies on how they should be provided; and
- Priorities for land acquisition, facility development, and renovation.

SUPPLY OF PARKLAND AND RECREATION FACILITIES

As of January 1, 2017, M-NCPPC has approximately 36,820 acres of parkland divided into large countywide and smaller community use parks which include a wealth of recreation facilities. The County is fortunate to have many partners providing open space protection and preservation. In addition to M-NCPPC and Municipal Parkland, these partners include Federal and State Parks, public school open space, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and private open space areas.

Demand Assessment and Estimates

PARKLAND

Priorities for future M-NCPPC parkland are analyzed in individual area and park master plans. Each plan assesses the opportunities to meet natural and cultural resource preservation goals, natural resource-based recreation needs as well as facility-based recreation needs. A summary of these needs is included in later in this chapter.

PARK FACILITIES

The remainder of this section focuses on the demand for specific recreation facilities to the year 2030. It discusses needed facilities and methodologies for estimating demand, and, for the first time, service delivery strategies for meeting needs. The strategies are based on approved plans and policies such as the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, the *Environmental Guidelines (M-NCPPC)*, and past PROS plans, as well as results of outreach, emerging trends and benchmarking.

Estimating exact numbers of recreation facilities demanded in the County is an extremely difficult task and subject to many future variables. Need estimates should be considered “guidelines” rather than hard and fast rules. They may be revised in the future, as needed, to accommodate changes in population projections and participation rates.

Maintenance of existing and future facilities is critical to their usability by the public. Renovation and improved maintenance of existing facilities is needed, particularly in older areas of the County, to keep them in safe, usable condition. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents of the Vision 2030 Survey and 74% of the respondents of the statistically valid survey (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*) indicated that making improvements to existing facilities is a top funding priority. To assure that we can maintain future facilities, their maintenance impact is calculated and noted in the Capital Improvements Program so public officials will be aware of their future budget impact. Park facilities should be co-located with other public facilities whenever feasible.

The Department of Parks is committed to incorporating the *2010 Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design (ADA)* into planning and development and upgrading of park and recreational facilities. Making facilities available and accessible to existing and future populations should be an integral part of all park and recreation planning and development and is therefore not detailed in the individual service delivery strategies (See *CHAPTER 2 - Policy Framework and Plan Foundation*).

The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommended, and the extensive outreach results for the *2017 PROS Plan* confirmed the following guiding principles for meeting future park and recreation needs in the County. The service delivery strategies in this chapter support these principles:

- Balance renovation and conversion of older, deteriorated parks and facilities with new construction
- Respond to changing priorities by re-defining existing land and facilities to provide different kinds of services
- Deliver services to areas of highest need

The statistically valid *2017 PROS Survey* assessed and prioritized needs for facilities. The methods used by the *2017 PROS Plan* for estimating future needs for each facility are based on participation rates and frequencies from that survey as well as from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) 2015 data, facility capacity, and census population projections to the year 2030. A service delivery strategy that recommends a size, park type, and geography is proposed for each facility.

Park Facilities Not Analyzed in this Plan

The park and recreation system also has many facility types that are not specifically addressed in the analysis of needs in this document, some of which are unique. They include equestrian facilities; therapeutic facilities; and specialized playground complexes, as well as primitive and full-service campgrounds, a carousel, miniature trains, event centers, exercise courses, golf courses and driving range, lakes and boating facilities, miniature golf, outdoor ropes courses, park activity buildings, splash playgrounds and indoor tennis centers.

Needs Determination and Prioritization of Facilities

Needs are estimated to the year 2030 for a selection of the most popular park and recreation facilities. The statistically valid survey (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*) measured how people ranked park and recreation facilities according to their current usage and frequency, as well as their importance, and how well they currently meet needs. The survey also measured the need for future facilities and the priorities for facility investments. This provided the opportunity to not only see what amenities are important to respondents, but also to get an idea of how the same amenities are viewed in relation to each other, allowing priorities to become more evident.

As stated in Chapter 1, Montgomery County residents report a high degree of satisfaction with the parks and recreation facilities and programs and consider them to be important to the quality of life in the County.

PRIORITIES FOR FACILITY INVESTMENTS

A rating for facility investment priorities was developed based on the results of the statistically valid survey (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*). The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility.

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following five facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

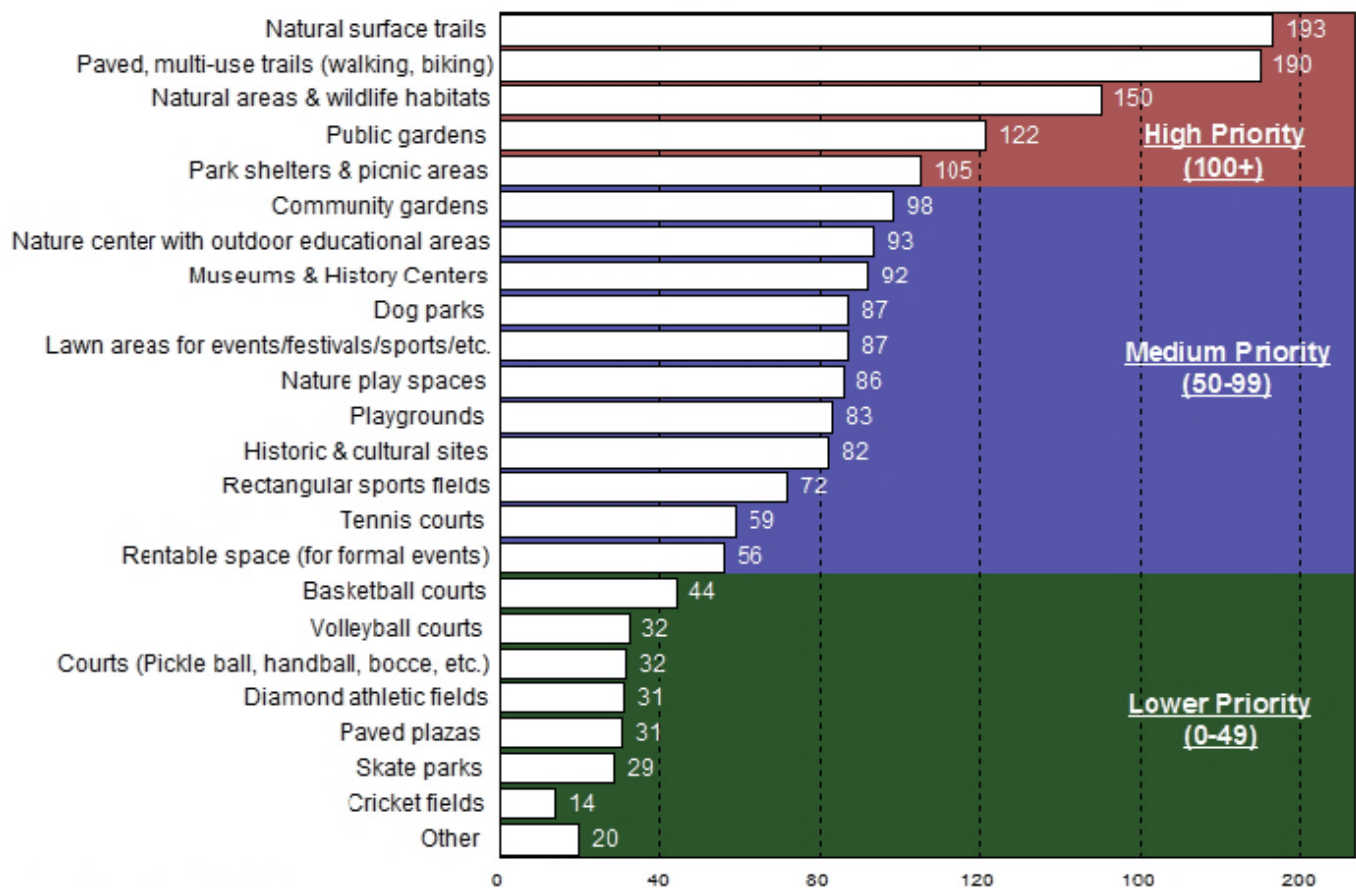
- Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding) (PIR=193)
- Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) (PIR=190)
- Natural areas and wildlife habitats (PIR=150)
- Public gardens (PIR=122)
- Park shelters and picnic areas (PIR=105)

The following chart shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 24 facilities that were assessed on the survey. When compared with the *Vision 2030* survey of 2010, three park facilities remained in the top four – natural surface trails, hard surface trails, and natural areas. Playgrounds dropped to a medium priority in the statistically valid survey (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*) while public gardens and park shelters and picnic areas rose to the top five priorities.

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The *2017 PROS Plan* estimates needs and recommends service delivery strategies not only for those facilities that ranked as high priorities, but also for some facilities that ranked lower in importance but that have unmet or partially met need such as rectangular sports fields, baseball fields, volleyball courts, skate parks, and dog parks. Recent trends in park facilities were added to the survey, including cricket, nature play spaces, pickleball, and rentable space for formal events.

Figure 10 - Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Facilities Base on the Priority Investment Rating.

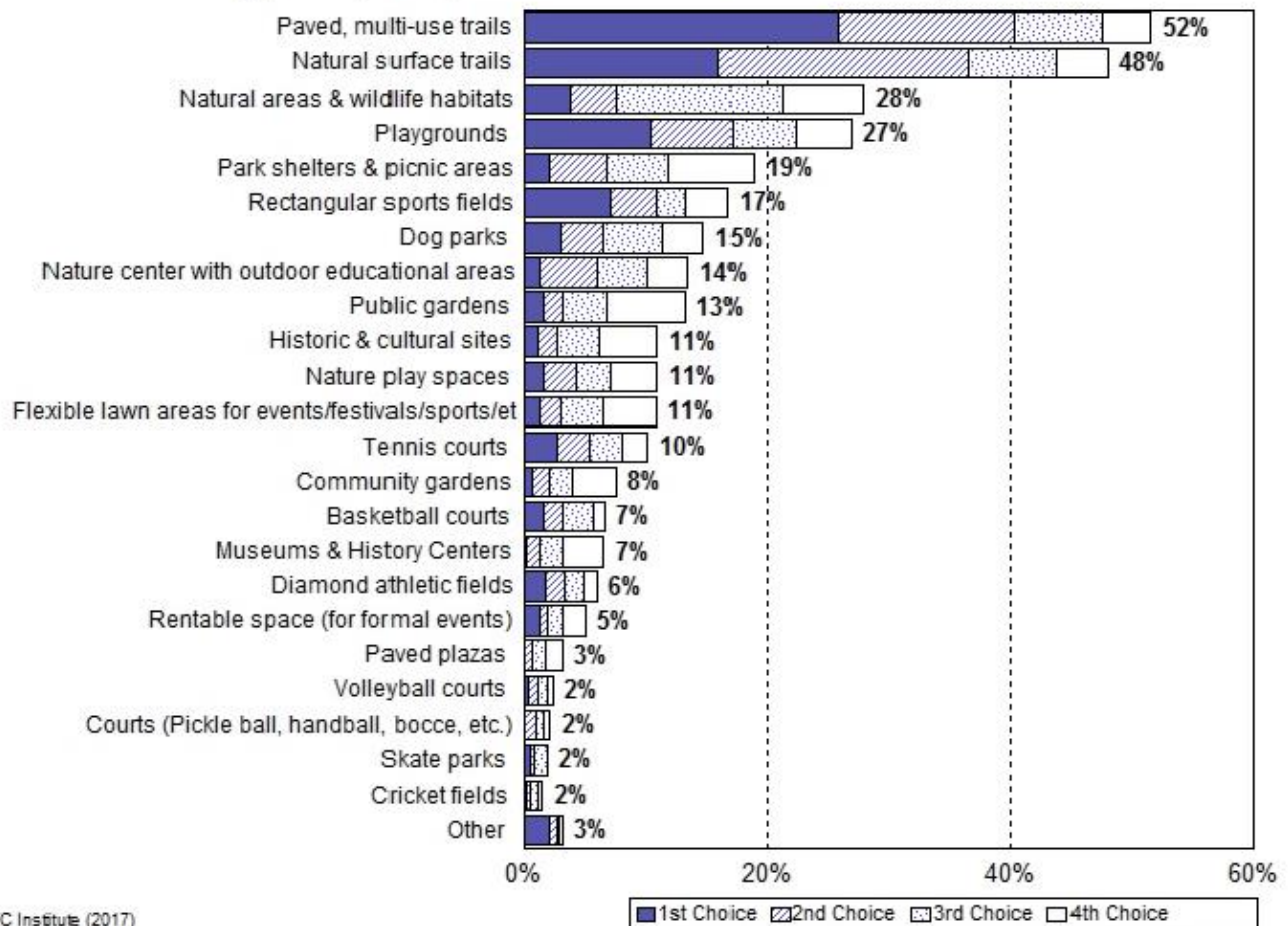


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Figure 11 - Top Four Facilities Most Important to Your Household.

Q11. Which four facilities are most important to your household?

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



SERVICE DELIVERY GEOGRAPHIES

The Service Delivery Recommendations in this document are grouped, by two geographies, into facilities serving the Countywide Areas and Planning Areas.

Figure 12 -Service Delivery Areas Map



METHODOLOGIES AND SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

The methodologies used in the *2017 PROS Plan* for estimated future needs are primarily based on guidance from State suggested methods, approved policies and plans such as the *Countywide Park Trails Plan* (M-NCPPC 1998, 2008, 2016), the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan Survey* (M-NCPPC, 2011), and Needs Assessment Survey (*Appendix 11, Needs Assessment Report, Chapter 3*).

The 2017 PROS Plan provides service delivery strategies for each facility are included to guide the type and distribution of facilities. These strategies will provide policy guidance for area master plans, park master plans, partnership proposals, site selection studies and implementation plans, facility plans and prioritization of future CIP work programs.

Countywide Facilities

The following details preliminary estimates for future additional needs for facilities that are served on a countywide basis. These facilities are projected on a total countywide basis because many are located in regional or recreational parks and they serve large portions of the County. Estimates account for existing inventory and population projections for all publicly owned areas of the County, including municipalities. The *2017 PROS Plan* includes facilities in other jurisdictions in the inventory of countywide facilities. Where there is a documented shortage of a facility type, and the current master plan or CIP proposals cannot fulfill that need in the future, other alternative providers will be examined to determine if they are meeting the projected unmet need.

HARD SURFACE AND NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS

Running, hiking/walking, bicycling and horseback riding continue to be among the most popular recreational activities on M-NCPPC parkland, and safe enjoyment of these activities require some type of trail, whether hard surface (paved) or natural surface (unpaved). Depending on the context, trail use may be considered natural resource-based recreation or facility-based recreation. The *2012 PROS Plan* defined natural resource-based recreation as “any leisure activity conducted outdoors that is dependent on a particular element or combination of elements in the natural environment. These elements cannot be easily duplicated by human effort.” Natural resource-based recreation includes a vast range of pursuits including bicycling, hiking, running, and horseback riding, bird watching, nature photography, wildlife viewing, kayaking, rowing, canoeing, and fishing. In contrast, facility-based recreation may be defined as any leisure activity dependent on a fabricated facility. Fabricated facilities can generally be provided anywhere, assuming the availability of space and funds for development. Examples of facility-based recreation including baseball, soccer, basketball and tennis, among many others.

Public surveys conducted during the *Vision 2030* and the *2017 PROS Plan* identify park trails as among the most popular and most used facilities in the park system. The surveys also revealed that residents want more trails, particularly closer to where they live and/or work, and that residents highly value park natural areas. Park trails and natural areas go hand-in-hand within the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks system. Park trails are gateways to natural areas; they are the means by which park users typically access and enjoy natural areas. Trails can be a destination, as well as a route to or through an area.

The M-NCPPC Department of Parks owns and manages 76 miles of existing hard surface trails and 160 miles of natural surface trails in the County. An additional 21 miles of natural surface and 112.6 miles of hard surface trails are owned and operated by other providers such as the State of Maryland, Montgomery County and the National Park Service. The *2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan Amendment* finds that some areas of the County are underserved by trails, and recommends looking at a variety of ways to increase the level of service of trails in addition to building new trail segments. Strategies include evaluating unsanctioned (aka “people’s choice”) trails to determine which ones are or can become sustainable, and these trails then can be brought into the official sanctioned (e.g., signed, marked, mapped and maintained) park trail system.

CALCULATION OF NEED

From a countywide perspective, residents are well-served by park trails. Compared to other Maryland jurisdictions, Montgomery County features an extensive recreational park trail system, both hard surface and natural surface. However, these trails are unevenly distributed geographically, as a result of

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the pattern and timing of past development and land acquisition opportunities. Some areas of the county are better served (defined as convenient access) than others. For example, our hard surface trail system is primarily located in downcounty stream valley parks in older, more densely developed urbanized areas. It is important to have trails where population densities are highest.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The *2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan* defines a framework for the countywide park trails network. “Loops and Links” identifies four large existing and nearly complete “hybrid” loops, while simultaneously recommending park trail, bikeway and sidewalk connectors between these loops and major parks and other regional destinations.

Hybrid loops include existing and proposed hard surface and/or natural surface trails on county parkland and other public lands. Where necessary to help fill critical gaps in the overall system or to link to major destinations, the new framework also includes a few existing or proposed regional bikeways and occasionally sidewalks and low volume roads.

Loops and Links focuses on continuous “circuit” trail user experiences and also the park trails, key regional bikeways or sidewalks that connect loops and links with major regional destinations. The system also establishes smaller “stacked loops.” With stacked loops, trails users can have shorter or longer trail experiences without retracing their routes. This type of park trail system offers a variety of loop experiences, both long and short.

Highlights of the plan include recommendations to:

- build more natural surface trails downcounty in the more urban areas
- build sustainable trails suitable for multiple user groups (hiking, mountain biking and equestrian)
- complete gaps in the regional trail system to make trail experiences continuous
- create series of loop trails closer to where people live, rather than focusing on longer-distance, cross-county trail experiences; and,
- provide a variety of trail experiences, both “destination trails” to which residents would be willing to drive for a longer experience as well as more local, community-serving trails to which residents can walk or bike from home.

The Loops & Links system is designed to offer the highest level of service in the areas of highest density. The Loops & Links system offers a very high level of service to existing and future county residents. When fully built-out, sixty-eight percent (68%) of residents will live within 1-mile of a loop or link and nearly one hundred percent (100%) will live within 3 miles. When regional bikeway connectors are included, 85% of residents will be located within 1 mile, and nearly 100% will be located within 3 miles. Under both scenarios, 100% of residents are served within 5 miles. The Level of Service Analysis shows that nearly 100 percent of the county’s population in 2030 will be served by a loop, link or regional bikeway as part of the Loops and Links framework. Some areas of the county will not be well-served by it. For these areas, trail user needs will be met by more locally-serving trail and/or bikeway segments.

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SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

The following strategies are based on recommendations in the *2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan* as well as *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, and more recent analysis in the *2017 PROS Plan* of proximity to trailheads:

- Implement Loops and Links as identified by the *2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan* and based on the plan's implementation criteria, as well as the *2017 PROS* analyses:
- Population density within one mile
- Return on investment
- Connectivity to destinations priorities
- Geographic parity
- Parkland ownership
- Walking distance to trailheads
- Areas of low access to park trails
- Expand the distribution of multi-use trails by identifying new multi-use trails particularly in currently or projected underserved and high-density, lower income areas with limited trail access
- Increase trail connectivity by filling in gaps in the regional trail system and creating linked series of loops
- Enhance trail connectivity to the county's recreational facilities and activity Centers
- Improve links to the county's bikeway system and recognize the trail system's value for non-motorized mobility
- Establish certain trails as limited-user trails to address the needs of hikers, bikers and equestrians
- Improve trail connections to provide increased accessibility to natural areas
- Identify and evaluate unsanctioned trails to determine which should be brought into the official, sanctioned park trail system
- Continue to plan, design and build designated bicycle skills areas (South Germantown, Carson Farm, Fairland) in partnership with mountain biking advocacy organizations

The *2017 PROS Plan* recommends that through the *2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan* as well as the work program for the Natural Surface Trail Construction Program, and the gaps in proximity and in park equity shown in the Trailhead Proximity analysis and the Park Equity analysis, the Department of Parks should build on these recommendations by prioritizing trails that help close gaps in the trail system. It should recommend realistic alignments for trail corridors, taking into account more detailed environmental and natural resource analysis than previous trail plans. It should also be coordinated with the *Master Plan of Bikeways* (currently underway), as much as possible to produce interconnected systems of trails and bikeways.

For natural surface trails, implementation efforts receive significant assistance from volunteers across the County. Montgomery Parks has an active volunteer program that supports natural surface trails

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implementation in a variety of roles, including inspecting trails for damage, maintaining existing trail sections and building new trail sections and installing trail bridges. Since 2012, more than 5,000 volunteers have contributed approximately 29,000 hours towards these efforts in the 160-mile natural surface trail system in Montgomery Parks.

SUSTAINABLE INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

The *Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030* was developed by the Recreation Department based on the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, with the goal (number 8.0) to provide an equitable and sustainable distribution of public indoor recreation spaces in Montgomery County. In addition to completing current planned facilities and renovations, the Plan recommends refining the model for future indoor community recreation centers, adding fewer, larger regional centers and combining them with indoor aquatics. It indicates that new construction should be focused in the underserved North and South Central growth corridor. The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* indicates that no additional outdoor aquatics facilities are needed, and that no new stand-alone indoor aquatics facilities are recommended. Accordingly, the *Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030* recommends continued evaluation of renovations and modernization of centers and pools and potential consolidation/repurposing of older smaller community and neighborhood facilities as may be warranted.

Similarly, the *2017 UPDATE* utilizes all of the same data collection methods as VISION2030 and the 2017 PROS Plan. In doing so, this data has confirmed the accuracy of the population projections from 2011. However, for this current version, additional resident preference surveying has been added to the mix. Community recreation facilities, Centers and Pools, were handled as separate items from the Parks demand / needs surveys conducted. This method provided further justification for the importance of the recreational facilities to the entire County population. See the full *Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030 – 2017 UPDATE* at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/>.

One of the most significant findings and recommendations to come out of the Plan and be re-confirmed by the 2017 UPDATE, urges the County to consider a different approach to delivering community recreation amenities/services including Centers and Pools. The Plan recommends that the County move away from the current smaller individual community-based approach and consider a larger scale regional approach to the development and operation of facilities. These facilities could take the form of larger combined multipurpose centers with aquatic features included – Community Recreation (CR) and Aquatic Centers (AC) which are being referred to as: Regional Recreation Centers.

The general information regarding Montgomery County Recreation Department facilities and its programs listed in this section is a brief overview of the department's facilities and operations. The *Montgomery County Recreation Facility and Development Plan 2010-2030*, incorporated by reference as part of this PROS Plan, includes more detail and can be found on the website of the Montgomery County Recreation Department at <http://www6.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/rec/files/publications/facilitydevelopmentplan.pdf>

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CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions: Future Unmet Need by the year 2030 based on the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan and the Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030 – 2017 UPDATE*: a total of four combined Community Recreation and Aquatic Centers.

Facility Size: 80,000+/- net square feet of programmable space (CRC - 35,000 & AC - 45,000). With a current calculation of 1.4 as the gross square foot adjustment factor the building will occupy around 110-115,000+/- gross square feet. Some portions of the facility can be developed as multi-floor space reducing the overall footprint to 90,000+/- gross square feet.

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

Priority platform for service delivery: With other institutional facilities (partner and/or co-locate with schools, libraries, park facilities, or other leisure service providers etc.), when appropriate, in highly accessible locations along multi-modal transportation corridors (e.g., public transportation routes, trails, major roadways, etc.) Optimum elements include:

- **Size:** 6.6 acres of programmable space (building: 110-115,000 gross square feet; parking: 350-500 spaces; large multi-age playground structure and sprayground: 12-15,000 square feet; multipurpose hard surface court games area: 15,000 square feet; multipurpose play field: 1.5 - 2 acres)
- **Geographic Distribution:** Prioritize adding public indoor recreation/aquatic centers in the North Central and South Central sub-areas where lower per capita level of service currently exists, and highest rates of growth are projected in the next 10 to 20 years (2010-2030)
- **Silver Spring:** Explore reuse of available sites for development of an urban combined Community Recreation & Aquatic Center. This community has no other community recreation facilities, is well served by mass transit and significant pedestrian access
- **White Flint** -Pursue a public/private coordinated development project at Wall Park which could bring a Community Recreation Center to the site along with redevelopment/expansion of the Montgomery Aquatic Center and Park facilities including structured parking
- **Shady Grove** - Take advantage of the Metro Center redevelopment and locate an expanded Community Recreation Center here. Undertake a detailed feasibility study to determine the need for an additional aquatic facility at this location; review usage of Germantown Aquatic Center, Germantown Outdoor Pool, Upper County Outdoor Pool, and City of Gaithersburg aquatic facilities, current and proposed. It is possible that no additional aquatic services are required and the project could proceed as an enlarged community recreation center only
- **Clarksburg** - Continue Facility Planning, begun in 2008, and including Site Evaluation for a combined Community Recreation and Aquatic Center to serve the North-central County area

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2012

Current Ongoing CIP Projects

- **White Oak Community Recreation Center (CRC) - Completed - Summer, 2012**

Recreation Facility Modernization

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ▪ Plum Gar NRC Renovation | Completed – Summer, 2013 |
| ▪ Scotland NRC Renovation | Completed – Fall, 2014 |
| ▪ Ross Boddy NRC Renovation | Completed – Fall, 2016 |
| ▪ Good Hope NRC Renovation | Construction – Fall, 2016 |
| ▪ North Potomac CRC | Completed – Fall, 2016 |
| ▪ Western Outdoor Pool Renovation | Completed – Spring, 2016 |
| ▪ Wheaton Library and CRC | Construction – Spring, 2016 |

FACILITY PLANNING / SITE EVALUATION PROJECTS

Silver Spring CR and AC (South County Regional Recreation Center) - Site Selection and Facility Planning – Design Development – Fall, 2016

Clarksburg CR and AC (North County Regional Recreation Center) - Planning and Site Evaluation – Ongoing

Recreation Facility Modernization

Update Programs of Requirement, Needs and Feasibility Assessments FY 13-18

- MLK Aquatic Center – Facility Planning – FY17
- Schweinhaut Senior Center – Facility Planning – FY17
- Clara Barton NRC
- Upper County CRC
- Bauer CRC – Deferred/Substituted with MLK Aquatic Center Renovation
- **White Flint CR and AC** (North Bethesda Regional Recreation Center) - Facility Planning, Revise / Update POR – FY13-18 - Ongoing

NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SITE SELECTION, AND FACILITY PLANNING

- Shady Grove CR and AC (Requires Aquatic Needs Assessment) - Site Selection and Facility Planning, Develop POR
- East Germantown CRC- Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Facility Planning
- Sandy Spring CR and AC- Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Facility Planning
- Western County CR and AC- Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Facility Planning
- Kensington CRC - Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Facility Planning

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- Kemp Mill CRC - Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Facility Planning
- Bethesda CRC- Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Facility Planning

FACILITY MODERNIZATION - DEVELOP ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND POR DOCUMENTS – FY 13-18

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| ▪ Bauer SC | ▪ MLK AC | ▪ Damascus CRC |
| ▪ Holiday Park SC | ▪ Coffield CRC | ▪ Wisconsin Plc CRC |
| ▪ Longwood CRC | ▪ Glenmont Pool | ▪ Germantown AC |
| ▪ Germantown CRC and Pool | ▪ Long Branch CRC and Pool | ▪ MidCounty CRC |
| ▪ Lawton CRC | ▪ East County CRC | ▪ North Potomac CRC |
| ▪ Potomac CRC | ▪ Bethesda Pool | ▪ Wheaton CRC |
| ▪ Olney AC | ▪ Praisner CRC | |

Source: Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030 - 2017 Update

NATURAL AREAS

Natural Areas are important not only for conservation of ecosystems, but for a form of recreation referred to as natural resource-based recreation. Natural resource-based recreation is defined as any leisure activity conducted outdoors that is dependent on a particular element or combination of elements in the natural environment. These elements cannot be easily duplicated by human effort. In contrast, facility-based recreation (any leisure activity dependent on a built facility) can generally be provided anywhere, assuming the availability of space and funds for development. Natural resource-based recreation includes a vast range of pursuits including bicycling, hiking, running, and horseback riding on trails, bird watching, nature photography, wildlife viewing, kayaking, rowing, canoeing, and fishing.

CALCULATION OF NEED

There is very little data available to determine precisely how much land can support a specific amount of natural resource-based recreation. That said, the quality of the natural area can affect the user experience. An area of high natural value, such as a Best Natural Area (See *CHAPTER 5 - Natural Resources Stewardship*) can afford a higher range of user experiences (e.g., high bird species diversity for birdwatching) than a similar sized area of low natural value.

The *Vision 2030* survey and the Needs Assessment Survey indicate natural areas, which are the platforms for natural resource-based recreational activities, rank higher than many other facilities across several survey questions. In the *Vision 2030 Survey*, natural areas ranked as the third highest (74%) amenity for which County residents have the highest need, exceeded only by natural surface and hard surface trails. In importance of adding, expanding, or improving future park facilities, natural areas ranked sixth. In the Needs Assessment survey, Natural Areas ranked third as a priority investment, after trails. (*Figure 10 - Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Facilities*). As the County's population

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grows, it is reasonable to assume the need for natural areas will increase. Surveys of various natural resource-based activities support the popularity and future need for natural areas. For example, 19% of the US population is estimated to participate in bird-watching, 7% in nature photography, and 4% in wildlife viewing (*2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife; 2006 Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis; and Wildlife Watching Trends: 1991- 2006*).

According to the results of the Needs Assessment, nearly 40% of the County's population participates in activities that typically occur in natural areas. Birdwatching, nature photography and wildlife watching collectively have an estimated 197,000 total participants in the county, approximately 20 % of the population, while more active natural resource-based recreation such as hiking, mountain biking, and trail running have an estimated 169,000 participants, or approximately 17% of the population.

U.S. Census projections indicate that by 2050, one in every four Americans will be over age 65 with a mean age of 45. As the population pyramid shifts and individuals age, use will likely shift from facility-based to natural resources-based recreation. As they age, individuals tend to put down their cleats and bats and pick up field guides and walking shoes.

Quality of life in Montgomery County is significantly enhanced when adults have easy access to natural areas where they can de-stress and unplug from fast-paced lives. As our population grows older, the importance of access to natural areas increases. In a recent white paper, the International Council on Active Aging cited many research studies showing the benefits nature has on adult health. One study concluded that spending time in natural environments promotes stress reduction and mental recovery from mentally demanding activities.

In addition, natural resource-based recreation forms the backbone of the meaningful experiences children and youth have in nature outside of school. Scout groups, religious youth groups, summer campers and teens fulfilling service learning requirements flock to parkland. Park-based out of school experiences ensure that Montgomery County's children have the opportunity to step away from screens and video games, and connect with the natural world.

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

This PROS Plan assumes that the need projected to the Year 2030 for natural areas will be met by the natural areas acquisition priorities recommended in Planning Board approved master plans and functional plans. Parkland in Montgomery County's system currently totals over 36,000 acres, 26,000 acres of which are classified as natural areas. There are approximately 5,000 additional acres of natural areas master planned for future acquisition. Additional lands will be identified for park acquisition as their importance to the public realm is identified. Priorities for future acquisitions (not currently master planned) will include additions to existing parks, areas with identified needs, and acquisition of strategic acreages in priority watersheds. In addition, future large donation opportunities will avail themselves. Specific criteria and priorities for natural resource conservation are described in *CHAPTER 5 - Natural Resources Stewardship*.

Park types that provide natural-resource based recreation include Regional Parks, Conservation Parks, Stream Valley Parks, and natural areas in all other park types. This PROS Plan does not attempt to quantify the amount of land needed into the future for natural resource-based recreation, because it is

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difficult to determine how much space is needed, unlike more facility-based activities such as fields and courts.

Natural resource-based recreation requires land and resource preservation far beyond the actual space for trails, wildlife viewing and other activities. Water quality capable of sustaining a diversity of fish and amphibian species, forests large enough to harbor forest interior dwelling birds, geological and soil conditions diverse enough to provide habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species - all are dependent on large tracts of land. Even urban wildlife accessible to people near their homes depend on threshold amounts and strategic locations of natural habitat.

By acquiring and preserving parkland, M-NCPPC ensures that children and youth can experience free-flowing streams, roll over logs to look for beetles or salamanders, follow butterflies through meadows and make the formative connections with nature that foster environmental stewardship over the long term.

In the midst of an obesity epidemic among children and teens, and with diabetes on the rise among our youngest citizens, natural resource-based recreation provides an antidote to sedentary lifestyles among our county's children. The US Forest Service is working with the National Environmental Education Foundation to train health care providers to give children and their guardians a written prescription for outdoor activity, connecting them with a particular forest, park, wildlife refuge, nature center or other public land near their neighborhood. This "prescription for nature" can help prevent serious health conditions in children including obesity and diabetes and can serve as a support mechanism for attention disorders. By expanding the acres of natural-resource based recreation areas available to area children, M-NCPPC delivers health benefits to Montgomery County's youngest residents.

The best resources will attract the greater numbers of visitors and the quality of a natural recreational experience is directly related to the quality of the environment within which the activity is taking place. High quality natural environments are characterized by a diversity of animals and plants, an absence of invasive plants, a general absence of manmade features and often include varied topography and hydrologic features, and the necessary quiet and solitude to enjoy nature. Large natural areas are needed to insure ecological function and sustainability, be it preserving watersheds or limiting fragmentation and edge effects to forested areas. Successful public acquisition of key acres can take decades due to available funding, negotiating with multiple owners, reaching agreements with willing sellers, etc.

DOG PARKS

The County currently has 8 dog parks. The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommends addressing the growing demand for dog parks, especially in urban areas. Dog parks ranked 11th in importance for addition, expansion or improvement in the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* Survey, and 9th in the Needs Assessment Survey.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Average size: 2 acres (smaller in community use and urban parks)
- Season length: 365 days

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- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 2 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 5
- Capacity per session: 30 (15 dogs per acre per session)
- Daily carrying capacity: 150 dogs per day per 2-acre facility
- Participation rate: 15.9% - Needs Assessment Survey
- Frequency: 8.4 x/year - Needs Assessment Survey

Future Unmet Need: 19.3 additional dog parks or 40 additional acres of dog parks

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

- Priority platforms for service delivery: Countywide (regional and recreational parks) or Community Use (Local, Neighborhood, and Urban) parks based on operational and user capacity considerations. Types and Sizes: The following 3 types of dog parks should be considered to meet needs:
- Countywide Dog Park: 3 acres, located in regional or recreational park
- Dog Park: 0.5- 3 acres, located in local parks
- Dog Spot: 0.25-0.5 acre, located in neighborhood or urban parks
- Geographic Distribution: Current inventory and future facilities to be delivered in proportion to percent of County population in each subarea of the County. Sites with currently underutilized facilities such as tennis courts should be considered for conversion.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Montgomery County currently has 11 community garden sites including those on school property. *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommends strategically adding these facilities. Community gardens ranked 12th in importance for addition, expansion, or improvement in the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* survey and 6th in the Needs Assessment Survey.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Average size: 50 plots (smaller in urban parks)
- Season length: 270 days
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 1
- Capacity per session: 100 (50 plots, average 2 persons per plot)
- Daily carrying capacity: 100 people per day
- Participation rate: 1.9% (National Gardening Association 2009)

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- Frequency: 36x/year (1x/week for 9 months)

Future Unmet Need: 18 additional community gardens or 900 plots

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

- Priority platform for service delivery: Prioritize community use parks and public schools, followed by recreational parks
- Geographic Distribution: current inventory and future gardens to be delivered in proportion to percent of County population in each subarea of the County

SKATE PARKS

There are currently 6.5 skate Parks countywide, including those in municipalities. While they ranked in the lower priority category in the Needs Assessment Survey, skate parks were recommended to be strategically provided by the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*. There is a need to address the growing demand for skate parks, especially in urban areas, to update policies, maximize partnerships and identify opportunities to add them in areas of greatest need. Unfenced skate facilities can be provided as small areas in parts of urban or local parks or can be multi-purpose park elements such as plazas with steps for seating or amphitheaters, ramps, rails, edging, etc.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Facility Size - 10,000 square feet (average)
- Season length: 210 days (7 months)
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 2 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 5
- Capacity per session: 25 (10,000 square feet divided by 200 square feet per person)
- Daily carrying capacity: 125 persons per day per facility
- Participation rate: 2.0% (SFIA, 2015)
- Frequency: 18.2x/year (SFIA, 2015)

Future Unmet Need: 9.1 skate parks or 100,000 square feet

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

- Priority platform for service delivery: Local parks - 10,000 -15,000 square feet skate parks within safe walking distance of middle schools or high schools, and near public transportation. If no space is available in local parks, in areas of unmet need, locate skate spots, 5,000-10,000 square feet, in neighborhood or urban parks. Locate largest skate parks, 15,000-20,000 square feet in Countywide parks
- Geographic Distribution: Current inventory and future need to be delivered in proportion to percent of County population in each subarea of the County. Sites with currently underutilized

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facilities such as tennis courts should be considered for conversion, in parks near mass transit stops.

CRICKET

Cricket fields have been requested by user groups for many years, but the space for one field is extremely large and the game lasts several hours; thus fields only accommodate a small number of users. We currently have 3.5 fields, 1 adult-sized and 1 youth-sized in the East County and adult-sized in the I-270 Corridor.

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan recommends that we provide a permanent adult-sized cricket field with supporting infrastructure.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Facility Size: 1 large oval
- Season length: 210 days (7 months)
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 8 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 1
- Capacity per session: 30 (2 teams, 15 players each)
- Daily carrying capacity: 30
- Participation rate: 1.0% (2017 Parks staff estimates)
- Frequency: 19.5x/year (2017 Parks staff estimate)

Future Unmet Need: 9.5 cricket fields

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

- Priority platform: converted baseball fields in local parks; underutilized softball fields large enough for youth play or which are expandable; new fields in regional or recreational parks; or new property to be added to any park
- Geography: I-270 Corridor, East County near Route 29 or other by major road such as MD 200/ICC (not inside the urban ring because there is a great rectangular field deficit there)
- Potential sites: Barmakian property, Little Bennett Regional Park, Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park, Calverton Galway Local Park, Burtonsville area parks (Santini Road Local Park)

OUTDOOR VOLLEYBALL COURTS

Outdoor volleyball has been a core service in Montgomery County for years. Input from user groups during the *2012 PROS Plan* indicated a demand for multiple courts for tournament play. There are 18 existing outdoor volleyball courts in the County, 11 of which are sand courts in M-NCPPC Parks. The trends show that casual/pick-up play exceeded organized play in grass and sand volleyball.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Facility Size: 1 court
- Season length: 180 days
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 2 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 5
- Capacity per session: 12 (2 teams, 6 players each)
- Daily carrying capacity: 60 persons per day per court
- Participation rate: 1.22% (SFIA, 2015)
- Frequency: 16.2x/year (SFIA, 2015)

Future Unmet Need: 2.4 volleyball courts

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

Facility grouping: Look for opportunities to add sand volleyball, with an emphasis on co-locating two or more courts for tournament play (with lighting when feasible).

- Priority platform: One site with 4 courts, lighted, in a regional or recreational park, with restrooms, picnic tables, one new site with 2 courts at a Local Park, or add one court to two existing volleyball sites.
- Geography: Perform an internal staff study. Locate near major roads, near where the most players are and/or where there is available space in regional or recreational parks.

PICKLEBALL

The Montgomery Parks Department is getting more and more requests for Pickleball. The *2012 PROS Plan* recommended that Parks should consider repurposing underutilized facilities. In the case of Pickleball, a better strategy may be adding a recreation offering on an existing facility, while keeping that facility's original intent. Specifically, adding Pickleball striping to an existing tennis court in good condition (defined as US Open standard blue court/green outline), while simultaneously keeping the tennis function. By adding another sport to the tennis courts, this strategy will increase the use of tennis courts for paddle sports, and reduce the use of such courts for unintended dog parks or other non-tennis purposes.

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CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Average size: 1 Court
- Season length: 270 days
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 2 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 5
 - Capacity per session: 8
 - Daily carrying capacity: 40
 - Participation rate: .78% (SFIA, 2015 and Parks staff estimates)
 - Frequency: 19.5 x/year (SFIA, 2015 and Parks staff estimates)

Future Unmet Need: 13.8 pickleball courts

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

With many tennis courts in the park system, a service delivery strategy analysis was developed to determine which courts, where, and under what circumstances would provide the best candidates to add Pickleball. The following factors were developed for site selection:

- Currently in good condition (already painted with the US Open standard (blue court, green outside)
- Scheduled to be renovated
- Near a Recreation Department building that is teaching Pickleball classes in the winter
- At a local park (2 courts) to increase usage
- Community requests, and
- Low actual tennis court usage.

The Montgomery County Recreation Department (MCRD) is currently providing Pickleball classes at selected Community Recreation Centers (CRC). These programs are provided indoors in the gymnasiums during the winter season. Many of these CRC's are located within, or adjacent to, local parks. Local parks generally provide 2 outdoor tennis courts. Having two outdoor courts adjacent to a CRC could provide "Recreational Programming and Facility Synergy" if the two outdoor courts are "paired" with the building's gymnasium providing the indoor court time. This pairing idea fits site selection criteria C and D and possible E.

Before any Pickleball is added to a tennis court, a deer camera will be installed for 2 weeks during good spring weather in to gauge how the existing tennis courts are utilized. Existing use data will determine tennis use by day of the week, time of the day and the amount of usage that is non -tennis. The deer camera for the above listed sites should be installed in time to capture existing use for approximately the first two full weeks in May.

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Sites could include candidates for Pickleball conversion which includes eliminating one tennis court and constructing two Pickleball courts.

Priority platforms for service delivery: Countywide (regional and recreational parks) or Community Use (Local, Neighborhood, and Urban) parks based on operational and user capacity considerations. Types and Sizes:

- 4 Court Model in regional or recreational park
- 2 Court Model - located in local parks
- Geographic Distribution: Current inventory and future facilities to be delivered in proportion to percent of County population in each subarea of the County.

Should the partnership with the MCRD CRC's prove fruitful, and Pickleball is being taught indoors at the following sites, and there is a documented need evidenced by the 2017 PROS Plan, the following sites should be considered:

- Damascus CRC – Moyer Road Local Park – US Open Standard
- Good Hope CRC – Good Hope Local Park – US Open standard
- Leland CRC – Leland Neighborhood Park – US Open standard
- Clara Barton CRC – Cabin John Local Park – US Open standard
- Fairland CRC – Columbia Local Park – NOT US Open standard
- Long Branch CRC – Long Branch Local Park – NOT US Open standard
- Mid- County CRC - Layhill Village Local Park – NOT US Open standard
- Upper County CRC – Johnsons Local Park – NOT US Open standard
- Coffield CRC – Rosemary Hills Lyttonsville Local Park – NOT US Open standard
- Praisner CRC – Columbia Local Park (old tennis bank)

Planning Area Facilities

Athletic Fields, Playgrounds, basketball and tennis courts are considered to be facilities needed “close to home” and are therefore calculated for each Planning Area. These public facilities will be supplemented by private homeowners’ association facilities and public use spaces that often serve as neighborhood parks particularly in more recently developed areas of the County. New schools will also supplement the supply of playgrounds and courts available to the public after school and on weekends.

ATHLETIC FIELD AREAS

CALCULATION OF NEED

The *2017 PROS Plan* includes estimated future needs derived from estimated future demand minus current supply. Needs are estimated by three field types – Baseball (90 ft. infield), Softball and Rectangles. Current inventory is assumed to be fields permitted through the Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF). These include all Park fields, public elementary, middle, and selected high school

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fields, and closed public school fields. Estimated participation rates and frequencies are based on SFIA data from 2015.

The needs estimates shown below are consistent with past PROS Plans, with traditionally higher needs for rectangular fields in Bethesda and North Bethesda. The higher baseball field needs may reflect that there are few bona fide baseball fields, defined as 90-foot infields and a mound, in the park system inventory.

Athletic fields are among the most expensive facilities to build and maintain. In order to assess the needs for fields as accurately as possible, several types of analysis will be synthesized into the Athletic Field Strategic Plan that is concurrent with the *2017 PROS Plan*, including:

- A 2017 Athletic Field User Survey currently underway
- Athletic field usage data from CUPF
- Focus groups with athletic field users
- Future needs estimates (preliminary estimates below)
- Trends in the industry
- Statistically valid general population survey

The Athletic Fields Strategic Plan will address all aspects of the existing inventory and issues to determine what can be solved through permitting, conversions, maintenance, management, natural turf enhancements, and lighting, as well as new construction. It will be based on in-depth data collection from surveys and focus groups with field users and will result in an implementation strategy to minimize field shortages.

Figure 13 - Estimated Future Field Needs for the Year 2030 by Planning Area

| ATHLETIC TEAM AREA | PLANNING AREA | BASEBALL 2030 | SOFTBALL 2030 | RECTANGULAR 2030 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Georgia Avenue | Aspen Hill - 27 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Bethesda/North Bethesda | Bethesda - 35 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| I 270 | Clarksburg - 13 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Eastern | Cloverly - 28 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Rural | Damascus – 10,11,14, 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Potomac | Darnestown – 24 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Eastern | Fairland - 34 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| I 270 | Gaithersburg Vicinity - 20 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| I 270 | Germantown - 19 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Silver Spring/TP | Kemp Mill/Four Corners - 32 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

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| ATHLETIC TEAM AREA | PLANNING AREA | BASEBALL 2030 | SOFTBALL 2030 | RECTANGULAR 2030 |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Georgia Avenue | Kensington/Wheaton - 31 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Bethesda/N Bethesda | North Bethesda - 30 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Georgia Avenue | Olney - 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Rural | Poolesville 12,16,17,18 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Potomac | Potomac - 29 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Georgia Avenue | Upper Rock Creek - 22 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Silver Spring/TP | Silver Spring - 36 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Silver Spring/TP | Takoma Park - 37 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Potomac | Travilah 25 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Eastern | White Oak - 33 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTALS | | 28 | 0 | 19 |

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

Future estimated field needs provide guidance to what type and where future fields should be provided. There are several ways to provide future field capacity:

- Increasing capacity by adding hours of use through lighting of fields
- Conversion from diamonds to rectangles to achieve rectangular fields
- Conversion from softball diamonds to baseball diamonds to achieve baseball fields
- Adding onto an existing park
- New construction on existing parkland
- New construction on future parkland

Rectangular Fields

It is likely that rectangular field needs will be met largely through new construction where there are no opportunities for lighting or for conversions from diamonds to rectangles (e.g., Bethesda, North Bethesda, Takoma Park, and Silver Spring). Discussions with user groups during the Athletic Field Strategic Plan outreach will determine whether there are any opportunities for alternative providers to meet the future needs.

Baseball Fields

For the purposes of estimating needs for specific field types, the supply and demand for 90-foot infield baseball diamonds was separated from the smaller diamond field types. Discussions with user groups during the Athletic Fields Strategic Plan outreach will determine whether diamonds with smaller infields are acceptable to meet some of the estimated future needs for baseball fields. Since the park system

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has a heavy supply of softball fields, an analysis of existing softball inventory may reveal opportunities for field expansions to meet baseball needs.

Other Athletic Field Efforts

In addition to finding longer range solutions, the Department of Parks can make other investments to provide an increase in ballfield opportunities, quality of experiences and efficient service delivery from the existing inventory, such as:

- Promote usable rectangular shaped spaces within private developments to take pressure off the park system (through regulatory review, e.g., Recreation Guidelines).
- Eliminate overlay fields when demand for one sport decreases to the point where a small number of remaining users of that same sport can be relocated to other fields.
- Coordinate with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to provide improved initial design, specifications, construction inspection, and maintenance standards for new fields at public schools.

PLAYGROUNDS

The Needs Assessment Survey ranked playgrounds 4th in importance to households. The County currently has approximately 332 playgrounds at parks and schools available to meet community needs after discounting time for school use. *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommended maintaining a high level of service. Playgrounds are used by children, parents, and grandparents and they should typically be included in all new local and neighborhood parks along with seating and shade.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Facility Size: large enough to fit 8 children
- Season length: 180 days
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 1.5 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 7
- Capacity per session: 8
- Daily carrying capacity: 50 persons per day per facility
- Participation rate of children ages 0-14: 21.5% (Needs Assessment Survey)
- Frequency: 4x/year (Needs Assessment Survey)

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Future Unmet Need: 0 playgrounds

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

Although the system has enough playgrounds to technically meet estimated needs, playgrounds are very popular. Therefore, when planning new or renovated parks, the following applies:

- Provide a playground in every neighborhood and local park
- Consider new playgrounds on existing or potential parkland where there are gaps in a walkable service area
- Keep existing playground inventory and replace at end of useful life cycle

OUTDOOR TENNIS

There are approximately 492 outdoor tennis courts currently available for community use in public parks and schools in Montgomery County. Tennis courts were reported as used by 36% of the population in the 2010 survey. Parks with only one or two courts can be considered for re-purposing in some instances. The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommended identifying strategic opportunities for larger groupings of tennis courts (indoor and/or outdoor). Tennis court complexes of 6 or more can be used more effectively than the local courts, for lessons, league play and tournaments, and experience much heavier use than the local park courts. New courts are constructed at all new middle schools (4 courts) and high schools (6-8 courts) that serve their educational and competitive program and serve community needs after school and on weekends. New single, stand-alone courts should not generally be built.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Facility Size: 1 court
- Season Length: 240 days
- Average day length: 10 hours
- Average stay length: 1.5 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 7
- Capacity per Session: 2.4
- Daily carrying capacity: 16 persons per day per court (based on ratio of singles to doubles, user observation survey, 1990)
- Participation rate: 5.56% (2015 SFIA)
- Frequency: 20x/year (2015 SFIA)

Future Unmet Need: 0 tennis courts

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SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

The park system currently has more tennis courts than estimated needs warrant. Underutilized tennis courts present a great opportunity for repurposing for other needed facilities. Underutilized should be repurposed to needed facilities such as pickleball courts, dog parks, skate parks, and futsal.

BASKETBALL (MULTI-USE) COURTS

There are over 377 existing basketball courts at parks and schools in the County that are available for community use. They are particularly important to serve teens and young adults. The 2010 *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* Survey indicated that basketball courts are used by 30% of the population. *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommended a service delivery strategy to review use patterns of existing basketball courts and identify opportunities for multiple uses such as futsal, as well as possible re-purposing of underutilized courts.

CALCULATION OF NEED

Assumptions:

- Facility Size: 1 court
- Season Length: 240 days
- Average day length: 10
- Average stay length: 1.5 hours
- Number of turnovers per day: 7
- Capacity per session: 10
- Daily carrying capacity: 65
- Participation rate: 7.32%
- Frequency: 22x/year

Future Unmet Need: 0 basketball courts

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

- There is a wide variety and number of basketball courts in the park system. Existing inventory should be maintained or augmented as follows:
- Consider new courts on existing or potential parkland where there are gaps in a walkable service area
- Keep existing court inventory and replace at end of useful life cycle
- Consider paving and striping basketball courts at recreational and regional parks and at high-use community use parks

TOPICS IN NEED OF FURTHER STUDY

The Department of Parks will continue to respond to park and recreation trends. In the past few years, an urban dog park, modern outdoor fitness equipment, and nature play spaces have been installed in the parks system. In addition, portable pop-up amenities such as a pump track and a climbing wall, have been located to attract more use in several parks. These relatively new amenities should be assessed for their “lessons learned” to apply to future needs estimates in the next PROS Plan. Other amenities that ranked highly in the Needs Assessment Survey and outreach that need further analysis include permitted picnic shelters, group picnic areas, nature centers, and futsal.

PERMITTED PICNIC SHELTERS

Montgomery County currently has 81 permitted picnic shelters, ranging in capacity from 30 to 100 people per shelter. *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* recommended strategically adding these facilities. Shelters and picnic areas ranked 5th in the 2017 PROS Survey for Priority Investment.

In order to assess the unmet need and recommend a service delivery strategy, the Department of Parks should perform an objective and data-driven analysis to monitor usage and demand in current picnic shelter locations and to identify gaps in the park system. Priority platforms for service delivery are countywide parks (Regional, Recreational) with restrooms and attractions for families. The analysis should consider where to add to or modernize existing picnic shelter areas where there is more demand than capacity, as well as where to locate new facilities.

GROUP PICNIC AREAS

The 2017 PROS Survey and other outreach identified areas for gathering and picnicking as priorities for many people in the County. The Department of Parks should perform an objective and data-driven analysis to monitor usage and demand in group picnic locations and to identify gaps in the park system. The analysis should consider where to consolidate existing underutilized shelters in to one larger group picnic area in countywide (Regional, Recreational) parks such as at Rock Creek Regional Park.

NATURE CENTERS

The Department of Parks currently operates four nature centers, located around the County, in Black Hills Regional Park, Wheaton Regional Park, Cabin John Regional Park, and Rock Creek Regional Park. Their services include indoor, outdoor, and off-site nature education and interpretation, offered to a variety of participants ranging from school-aged children to adults. The four nature centers are outdated and in desperate need of upgrades and replacement.

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan recommends expanding outdoor nature programs. This function was ranked among the top priorities by the statistically valid *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* survey. The Needs Assessment Survey identified Nature Centers with outdoor education areas seventh in priority for investment. The Department of Parks should produce a Nature Centers Functional Plan with an objective and data-based analysis to determine if and where any new nature centers or renovations should be constructed in the park system. This would include analysis of the existing facilities, a calculation of need and a service delivery strategy.

The Nature Centers Functional Plan is needed to determine:

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- The proper location of nature centers in the county to equitably and adequately serve the diverse population needs of Montgomery County
- The themes and purpose of each center
- Programming and exhibits needs and desires of residents of Montgomery County
- Fiscal impacts on budgets for new centers and renovations.

Outcomes of the Plan would include options for nature center sites based on social equity and population density, with a list of possible themes for centers. The Plan should be informed by outreach to the community to assist with setting program and exhibit priorities. Finally, the Plan would need to include an implementation strategy that identifies fiscal impacts and possible funding sources as well as a timeline for implementing the renovation and construction of new nature centers.

FUTSAL

- Futsal is a growing sport that allows soccer to be played outside when the soil is wet. It is typically played with fewer players per team, and as a pick-up sport. The Department of Parks should perform an objective and data-based analysis to look for an opportunity for a pilot futsal court on underutilized sports courts near an existing rectangular field.

TENNIS

Evaluation of underutilized tennis courts is needed. The Department of Parks should perform an objective and data-based analysis using deer cameras to determine, document, and define underutilized tennis courts for repurposing to skate parks, futsal, and dog parks. Sites selected should be consistent with site selection criteria and service delivery strategy.

CHAPTER 5 - Natural Resources Stewardship

Introduction

The soils, streams, rivers, wetlands, woodlands, and other natural resources of Montgomery County support a variety of ecological communities and forms the backbone of our park system. Montgomery County Parks recognizes both the anthropogenic benefits and ecological benefits (e.g. clean air and water, quality of life, and natural resource based recreation) of preserving these areas –so much so that the stewardship of these resources is key to the Mission, Vision and Values of the Department of Parks. The critical concern is how to balance the protection of the county's air, water, land, wildlife resources and natural beauty with providing recreation, managing growth and development, and achieving comprehensive land use priorities.

The advent of the Commission and the subsequent General Plan is the genesis for natural resources protection efforts in Montgomery County. The core of the Commission's goals, dating back to its creation in 1927, is preserving stream valley watersheds and greenspace necessary to water and air quality, and for providing public access opportunities. In the decades since, the field of ecology has advanced to more fully understand how development and other land uses contribute to habitat loss, declining stream quality and decreases in biodiversity. Natural resource stewardship policies and actions have evolved parallel the changes in the science. Today, natural resources stewardship within the County is focused on maximizing three primary goals: health, ecosystem function, and biodiversity.

The first step towards stewarding natural resources is having baseline knowledge of the critical habitat features of distinct communities. These features can include but are not limited to acreage, soil types, geology, forest type and successional stage, watershed information and suitable connectivity. For example, water quality capable of sustaining a diversity of fish and amphibian species often requires limits on impervious surfaces within the drainage area, and attention to pollution prevention; forest interior dwelling bird species –often the most sought out by birding enthusiasts –require forests large enough to have mature trees and understory not impacted by invasive plants; and rare, threatened, endangered and watchlist plant species require a unique mix of geologic and soil conditions often only found in one geographic location.

Even in urban environments, the presence of wildlife requires specific features and strategic locations of natural habitat. Seeing a frog is often taken for granted, especially in less developed, more natural areas of the County. For people in urban environments to experience seeing a frog, a large enough area is required with natural structures including vernal pools and/or wetlands, a requirement of the life cycle of frogs and toads in the Piedmont region of Maryland.

With a healthy understanding of wildlife habitat relationships, we can better research, analyze and steward existing natural resources. This stewardship comes in the form of assessing impacts, planning efforts, and active management programs that identify, protect, preserve and manage the county's natural environment. We also use these strategies to scientifically identify and target new properties within the county that should be conserved to enhance our park system by acquiring land that will adding new or expanding existing critical habitat features.

Many of these programs assist in the implementation of the seven visions of the Governor's Commission on Growth in the Chesapeake Bay Region that relate to the protection of sensitive areas, stewardship of the Bay and conservation of resources. Since the 2012 PROS Plan, the most notable addition to water quality programs is the Department of Parks acquiring a State/Federal Phase II National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This permit requires measures to reduce the amount of non-point source pollution and untreated stormwater from impacting our waterways and has significantly shifted the focus of water quality management programs.

This Chapter includes information on State and County Natural Resource goals and implementation programs for conservation of natural resource lands. Natural resource GIS maps and data requested by the State will be provided in digital format as requested. See Appendix 9, Natural Resources Maps and GIS Data List of Deliverables for a list of the specific maps and data provided.

Goals

STATE GOALS

Achieving the State's goals for the conservation of natural resource lands depends on cooperation and coordination among federal and local governments, citizens, conservation organizations, and the private sector:

- Identify, protect, and restore lands and waterways in Maryland that support important aquatic and terrestrial natural resources and ecological functions, through combined use of the following techniques:
 - Public land acquisition and stewardship;
 - Private land conservation easements and stewardship practices through purchased or donated easement programs;
 - Local land use management plans and procedures that conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs;
 - Support incentives for resource-based economies that increase retention of forests, wetlands, or agricultural lands;
 - Avoidance of impacts on natural resources by publicly funded infrastructure development projects; and
 - Appropriate mitigation response, commensurate with the value of the affected resource.
- Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas, according to a strategic framework such as GreenPrint (which is not to be confused with the former easement program also called GreenPrint).

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- Conserve and restore species of concern and important habitat types that fall outside the green infrastructure: rock outcrops, karst systems, caves, shale barren communities, grasslands, shoreline beach and dune systems, mud flats, non-forested islands, etc.
- Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs.
- Assess the combined ability of State and local programs to:
 - Expand and connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure;
 - Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations;
 - Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions;
 - Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production; and
 - Support a productive forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing the economic viability of privately owned forestland.
 - Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated State/local strategy to achieve them through State and local implementation programs.

COUNTY GOALS

County goals reflect and complement those of the state. M-NCPPC has been a leader in implementing the goals of many state environmental and resource management programs, and has even provided a model for state programs in certain instances. The *1993 General Plan Refinement* reflects the eight visions of State Planning Policy and the environmental goals and objectives in that document directly reflect the state goals stated above. Most recently, the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* provides general and specific direction to natural resource conservation goals that also reflect state goals.

County General Plan

The approved and adopted *1993 General Plan Refinement* states the following Environmental Goal that includes four Objectives and accompanying implementation Strategies that are most relevant to the protection of natural resources by the Parks Department.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL

Conserve and protect natural resources to provide a healthy and beautiful environment for present and future generations. Manage the impacts of human activity on our natural resources in a balanced manner to sustain human, plant, and animal life.

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Objective #2: Preserve natural areas and features that are ecologically unusual, environmentally sensitive, or possess outstanding natural beauty.

Strategies

- Protect natural resources through identification, public acquisition, conservation easements, public education, citizen involvement, and private conservation efforts.
- Connect parks and conservation areas to form an open space and conservation-oriented greenway system.
- Require open space dedications in new subdivisions that maximize protection of stream valleys and other sensitive environmental features.
- Ensure that development guidelines are reviewed periodically to make certain that they are environmentally sensitive and reflect current technologies and knowledge of the environment.

Objective #3: Protect and improve water quality.

Strategies

- Limit impacts on water quality by designating compatible land uses near water resources.
- Identify and protect recharge areas for aquifers, individual wells, headwater springs, and seeps through land use and innovative control techniques.
- Manage activities in the Potomac and Patuxent river basins above water supply intakes to prevent pollution that might endanger the region's water supply.
- Prevent or mitigate thermal pollution that may be harmful to aquatic life and the general ecology of the County's waters through land use policies.
- Control runoff and flooding by minimizing impervious surfaces.

Objective #4: Conserve County waterways, wetlands, and sensitive parts of stream valleys to minimize flooding, pollution, sedimentation, and damage to the ecology and to preserve natural beauty and open space.

Strategies

- Identify and protect wetlands and other sensitive parts of watersheds.
- Continue parkland acquisition in key stream valleys.
- Limit the potential damage to life and property from flooding.
- Prohibit development too close to streams, in the 100-year ultimate floodplain, and in flooding danger reach areas of dams, unless no feasible alternative is available.
- Maintain the natural character of drainage areas in the immediate vicinity of streams, rivers, and lakes.
- Plant and retain trees and other vegetation near streams.
- Develop programs to rehabilitate damaged streams and then to maintain them.
- Mandate "no net loss" of wetlands.

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Objective #6: Preserve and enhance a diversity of plant and animal species in self-sustaining concentrations.

Strategies

- Determine and protect the land and water masses and linkages necessary to support a diversity of species in self-sustaining concentrations.
- Plan a system of parks, conservation areas, subdivision open space, and easements to support a diversity of species in self-sustaining concentrations.
- Minimize forest fragmentation to protect habitat continuity.

Objective #8: Increase and conserve the County's forests and trees.

Strategies

- Identify and designate forest preservation and tree planting areas.

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks & Recreation in Montgomery County, MD

The *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* process, completed in 2011, developed a series of detailed recommendations for moving forward with the mission to provide parks and recreation to the County's residents, including many goals and objectives important to the conservation of natural resources. The most relevant goals and objectives for Parks Department implementation are included here.

GOAL 2

Promote awareness, appreciation, and understanding of Montgomery County's natural and historical resources.

Objectives

- Develop and implement interpretive master plans to guide educational and interpretive programs.
- Develop a multi-age environmental literacy program to raise fundamental understanding of the natural systems of Montgomery County, the relationships and interactions in the living and non-living environment, and how to deal sensibly with complex issues that involve weighing scientific evidence, uncertainty, and economic, aesthetic, and ethical considerations.

GOAL 4

Provide adequate and appropriate public lands and facilities that are equitably distributed across the County to meet the needs of residents.

Objective

- Provide an appropriate balance between stewardship and recreation.

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GOAL 9

Maintain quality park and recreation lands and facilities for efficiency, safety, attractiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Objectives

- Continue to refine current maintenance levels of service and standards based on industry best practices (e.g., maintenance, health, and safety standards) and update standards (e.g., mowing frequency for different park types, natural resources management, routines to maintain clean parks and recreation facilities, etc.)
- Continue to identify operating budget impact (OBI) needed for new capital improvement projects and acquisitions and allocate adequate resources (e.g., program staff, maintenance, supplies and materials, other services and charges, etc.)
- Expand SmartParks applications to park planning, natural resources management, and historic resources management, etc.

GOAL 11

Inventory, conserve, restore, and enhance ecologically healthy and biologically diverse natural areas with a focus on Park Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas, and Environmentally Sensitive Areas as defined in the *"Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan" (M-NCPPC, 2005)*.

Objectives

- Develop a protocol and schedule for routine inventory and analysis of natural resources like the "Montgomery County Stream Protection Strategy."
- Develop a countywide natural resources management plan.
- Prioritize Best Natural Areas and Biodiversity Areas based on their ecological value and biological diversity.
- Develop and implement natural resources management plans for all Best Natural Areas and Biodiversity Areas by 2018 and update each of them every six years.
- Develop comprehensive restoration plans for down-county stream valley parks including Rock Creek, Sligo Creek, Little Falls Branch, Cabin John Creek, and Northwest Branch.
- Expand the current white-tailed deer management program into down-County areas if consistent with public demand, natural resource management needs, and public safety.
- Develop natural resources-based stewardship training for park staff.
- Develop new volunteer-based programs to assist with the inventory and management of natural resources in County parks (e.g., Forest Stewards).
- Determine staffing levels required to accomplish all objectives.
- Expand control of non-native invasive plants (NNIs) particularly in Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas, and other Environmentally Sensitive Areas of parkland.
- Review and revise "Nuisance Wildlife Guidelines for Beaver and Canada Geese".

Implementation

RESEARCH AND ANALYZE NATURAL RESOURCES

To achieve State and County resource preservation goals, the Commission uses standard procedures to research and analyze natural resources. To provide baseline data on terrestrial flora and fauna and aquatic fauna, three primary types of research conducted include: resource inventories, monitoring for changes in resource condition, and making predictions of future resource condition using various tools and associated metrics. Routine inspection and quantitative analysis of natural area habitats and the organisms within, commensurate with the resource and anticipated rate of change, provide a robust indication of ecosystem function and health. These data then provide a baseline from which to evaluate how preservation, conservation, and development strategies benefit the public and how these tools might be enhanced.

To appropriately manage habitat for wildlife diversity, it is necessary to know what species are found, or expected to be found, in each park or habitat type. Such scientific research provides vital information about the location and condition of critical habitats that can be identified as Priority Natural Resource Areas within the Park system. These Priority Natural Resource Areas then provide the basis for necessary resource preservation measures to accomplish stewardship objectives.

Inventory, Monitor, and Predict

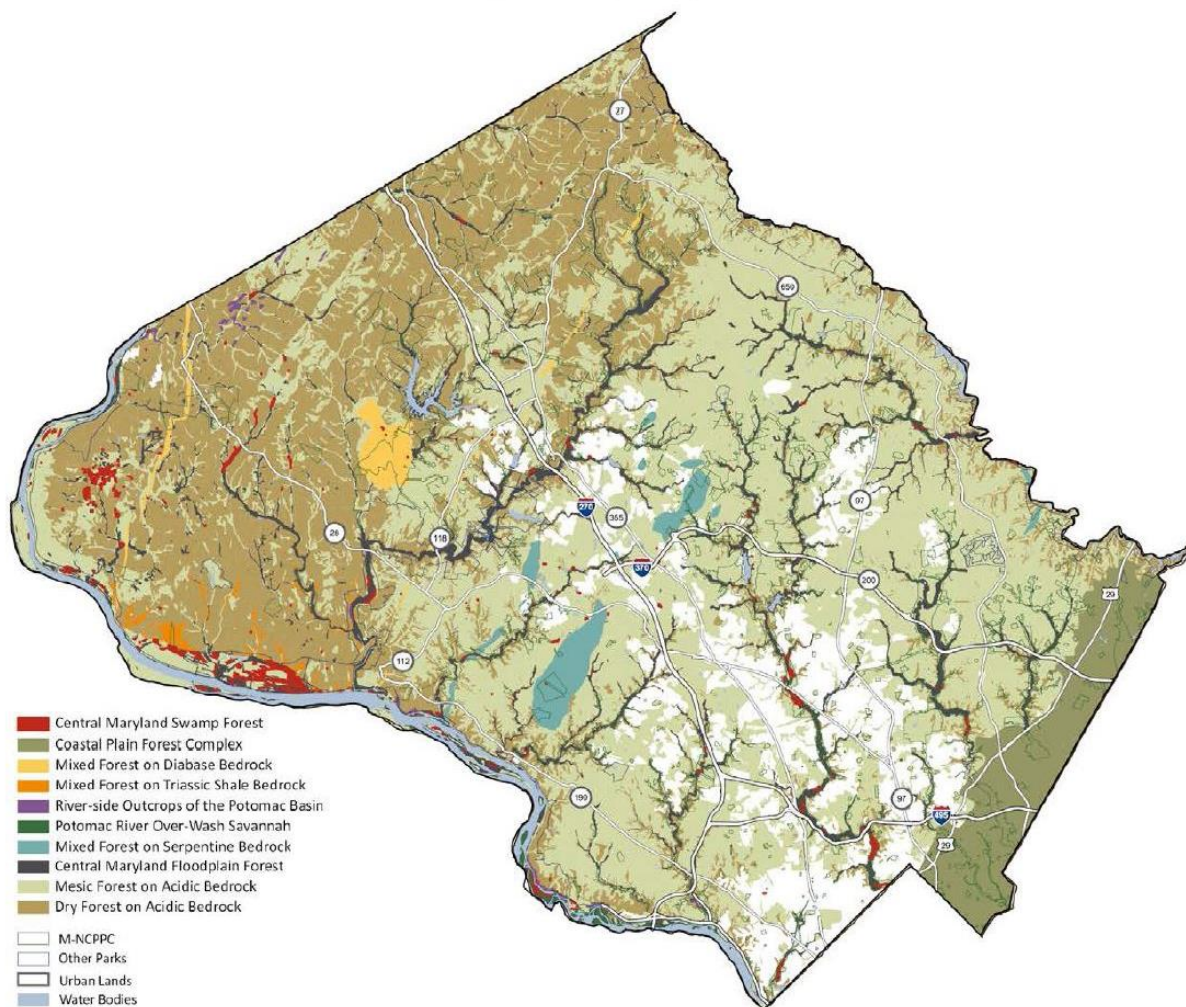
Major Terrestrial Habitats

The Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) for Natural Areas in M-NCPPC Parkland in Montgomery County (2013) identifies and maps ten Major Terrestrial Natural Communities found in Montgomery County. These terrestrial habitats consist of ecological communities derived from unique contributions of geology, soils, physiographic features and climate. Other significant habitat types and microhabitat features – such as successional forest, grasslands, rock outcrops and vernal pools – are described in the *NRMP* and exist throughout these Major Terrestrial Communities.

Through inventory and monitoring efforts, parkland is categorized into these ten Terrestrial Habitats. Identifying all undeveloped parkland by habitat type assists with inventory efforts by allowing for prediction of the plants and animals likely to be found in a given location. Categorizing parkland by Terrestrial Habitat also provides input into appropriate methods for managing resources and assists with determining where to focus active resource management efforts as described further in this chapter.

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Figure 14 - Map of Major Terrestrial Natural Communities of Montgomery County, Maryland



TERRESTRIAL FLORA AND FAUNA

Biological monitoring of terrestrial habitat is focused on conservation of wildlife and plant species and systems. Natural Resources Stewardship staff are updating protocols and inventory standards to complete and update park inventories on a more consistent and systematic basis and based on accurate, current and relative scientific principle and process. Montgomery Parks has set a goal to inventory and monitor 1000 acres of natural areas annually, with a focus on the best resources in each of the ten Major Terrestrial Communities. Inventories also will be tied to the work program for the development of Operation and Use Plans (see below).

Terrestrial inventories will generally consist of analysis of forest successional stage and habitat guild classification, plus identification of essential habitat or key terrestrial wildlife habitat, e.g. forest interior, edge/interior ratio, microhabitats. These data are collected from a variety of historical and digital data sources and new field inventory work. Data may be derived from available static data including existing

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Forest Stand Delineations, inventories of Rare, Threatened, Endangered and watchlist plant species, soils maps, and historic flora/fauna inventories and reports. Additional data from outside sources may be included in inventories, as appropriate, such as information from the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas, Christmas Bird Counts, the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas Project, the North American Butterfly Association and the Mid-Atlantic Invertebrate Field Studies website.

Once existing data is assembled for a terrestrial resource inventory, active data collection is conducted to supplement existing data sources and to monitor current conditions of the resources. Such active collection efforts may include detailed mapping of critical habitats, select wildlife surveys, and non-native invasive (NNI) plant species inventories. Data collection will be done by both park staff, park contractors and volunteers.

In the final step, existing and new data can be assessed to make predictions of habitat quality and potential future impacts. Undeveloped parkland can be categorized in the appropriate Major Terrestrial Habitat, helping us to predict what other plants and animals that may be served by these habitats. The habitat type can further help us to predict future changes from land use changes or other human activity based on the relative sensitivity of each habitat type to environmental impact. In addition, Parks studies meteorological data and other predictive models to identify overarching trends affecting ecosystems and to identify resources at risk of degradation.

Documenting unique habitat, flora and fauna, and analyzing related spatial and temporal trends allows for accurate management goals and to guide responsible development in alignment within these; and evaluation and prioritization permits the best allocation of resources where most beneficial. GIS and data sharing is often utilized to guide Commission and county policies, and helps to guide land acquisition and use in balance.

Aquatic Resources

In Montgomery County, parkland contains over 488 miles of streams. As stewards of county parkland and the waters flowing through it, an understanding of the general health of these waters is imperative. These biological communities are extremely sensitive to both pulsed and cumulative anthropogenic stresses within the County's watersheds. Aquatic community composition and structure provide metrics that can be compared to high-quality, unimpaired reference streams to determine a relative state of health.

Over the past several decades, Parks' biological monitoring program has tracked the health of these streams through numerous partnerships with various county, state, and federal agencies. Staff follow the Maryland Biological Stream Survey (MBSS) standardized methods developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to monitor freshwater fish and benthic macroinvertebrate communities specific to Maryland streams.

Over the past PROS 5-year cycle, 50 stream sites have been monitored in 13 different watersheds. The results of Parks' stream monitoring efforts support a wide variety of resource management needs across both park and planning domains. Developing integrated estimates of stream condition over entire watersheds along a measurable temporal and spatial scale allows for informed and responsible planning decisions appropriate to development or parkland acquisition. Emerging trends in biological health

within developing watersheds can also help to target stormwater management opportunities where they are needed the most.

In addition to the general watershed monitoring program, targeted monitoring sites allow for assessment of stream restorations and other stormwater management strategies, effects of emergency infrastructure failures, significant development projects, resources being considered in both area and park master plans, and parks where sensitive or high quality water resources have been identified and need to be monitored (i.e. Special Protection Areas, Best Natural Areas and Biodiversity Areas).

Identify Priority Natural Resource Areas

Utilizing this extensive knowledge base resulting from research, inventory and monitoring plus predictive analysis, important resources within Parks are categorized to assist with management and protection efforts. The best quality and most unique ecological communities within the Park system have been identified and categorized as Biodiversity Areas or Best Natural Areas. Other important natural resources within Parks are identified as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, a category defined in the *Guidelines for Environmental Management of Development in Montgomery County (Environmental Guidelines, January 2000)*. The Environmental Guidelines is the document used by the Planning Board to protect natural resources through the land development process. These three categories collectively make up Priority Natural Resource Areas within the park system.

These categorizations were initially developed in the 1985 – 1995 timeframe to ensure special preservation and conservation efforts for the most significant ecological communities in Montgomery County. This section includes a brief description of the purpose and criteria that define each Priority Natural Resource Area. More detailed information about Biodiversity Areas (BDAs) and Best Natural Areas (BNAs) can be found in the *2013 NRMP* referenced above including significant features, major terrestrial habitat types, and watershed and water quality. More details on the determination of ESAs can be found in the *Environmental Guidelines*.

BIODIVERSITY AREAS

Biodiversity Areas (BDAs) were first identified in the early 1990's through a cooperative research effort with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Division. The goal of BDAs was to identify rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats across the County, and further to recommend areas within parkland for conservation efforts and areas outside of parkland for future acquisition into the park system.

Biodiversity Areas (BDAs) are defined as areas of parkland containing one or more of the following:

- Large areas of contiguous, high quality forest, marsh or swamp that show little evidence of past land-use disturbance
- Rare, threatened, endangered or watch-list species
- The best examples of unique plant communities found in Montgomery County
- Areas of exceptional scenic beauty

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There are currently 33 Biodiversity Areas designated in parks across the County totaling 4469 acres of high quality resources. Many BDAs are linked to unique geological features and bedrock, as described in the *Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP, 2013)*. Examples of habitats that are designated as BDAs include:

- River-rock outcrops of the Potomac River Basin
- Serpentine, diabase or limestone influenced plant communities
- Plant communities on soils derived from Triassic shale, siltstone, sandstone or conglomerate
- Forest types ranging from swamps and floodplain forest to mesic and dry forest

BEST NATURAL AREAS

In the early 2000's, an effort was made to identify the "best of the best" resources within the park system that were the best examples of each natural community type. The intent was to select the highest quality resources within the designated BDAs and to provide those Best Natural Areas with a heightened level of protection, conservation efforts and interpretation to the public. BNAs are not only the best quality examples of a given resource type, they are often significantly larger than BDAs, resulting in a larger range of microhabitat types and providing the natural space necessary to support important species of flora and fauna.

Best Natural Areas (BNAs) are defined as areas of parkland which contain one or more of the following:

- Large areas of contiguous, high quality forest, marsh or swamp that are generally more than 100 acres and show little evidence of past land-use disturbance
- Rare, threatened, endangered or watch-list species
- The best examples of unique plant communities found in Montgomery County in the ten Major Terrestrial Natural Communities
- High quality wetlands, including those of Special State Concern as noted in COMAR Title 26
- Aquatic communities rated as good or excellent in the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy
- Special Trout Management Areas as noted in COMAR Title 08
- Areas of exceptional scenic beauty

There are currently 13 BNAs that include 9674 acres of many different habitat types. Just as for BDAs, the BNAs often result from the influence of unique geological features and frequently include examples of the special habitat types listed under BDAs. BNAs currently include designated portions of the following parks:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ Little Bennett Regional Park | ▪ Blockhouse Point Conservation Park |
| ▪ Black Hill Regional Park | ▪ Serpentine Barrens Conservation Park |
| ▪ Hoyles Mill Conservation Park | ▪ Watts Branch Stream Valley Park |
| ▪ River Road Shale Barrens Conservation Park | ▪ Rachel Carson Conservation Park |
| | ▪ North Branch Stream Valley Park |

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- Cabin John Regional Park
- Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park
- Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley Park
- McKnew Conservation Park

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The final resource category within Priority Natural Resource Areas is Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). ESAs were initially established by State regulation (Article 66B, repealed and replaced with Article 24-305) and are now defined in the *Environmental Guidelines: Guidelines for Environmental Management of Development in Montgomery County* (M-NCPPC, 2000) as resources that need protection through the development review process. The Environmental Guidelines identify landscape characteristics that are important within the hydrologic cycle (such as stream and wetland buffers and steep slopes) to include within ESAs. The guidelines include methods for limiting impacts to ESAs through the development process, thus correlating positively with water quality, integrity of erosion control, water uptake and groundwater recharge. The protection of ESAs through the regulatory review of development by the

Environmentally Sensitive Areas include:

- Streams and stream buffers
- 100-year floodplains
- Wetlands and wetland buffers
- Steep slopes
- Highly erodible soils
- Habitats of rare, threatened, endangered, and watch-list species

PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS: MANAGEMENT, PROTECTION AND INTERPRETATION

Collectively, Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas and Environmentally Sensitive Areas within parkland are considered Priority Natural Resource Areas that are the focus of the Department of Parks' efforts to manage and preserve natural resources. The Department goes to great lengths to steward the most significant of these three designations, the Best Natural Areas (BNAs) and Biodiversity Areas (BDAs), by limiting the introduction of new facilities and removing existing development when possible, except for trails which are important for public access, interpretation, and appreciation by the public. However, as an older park system that has developed since 1927, many of our parks – especially in the down county area – were developed prior to the Environmental Guidelines and therefore have existing amenities in Environmentally Sensitive Areas. Development that currently exists within ESAs includes roads, parking areas, playgrounds, and many types of active recreation facilities.

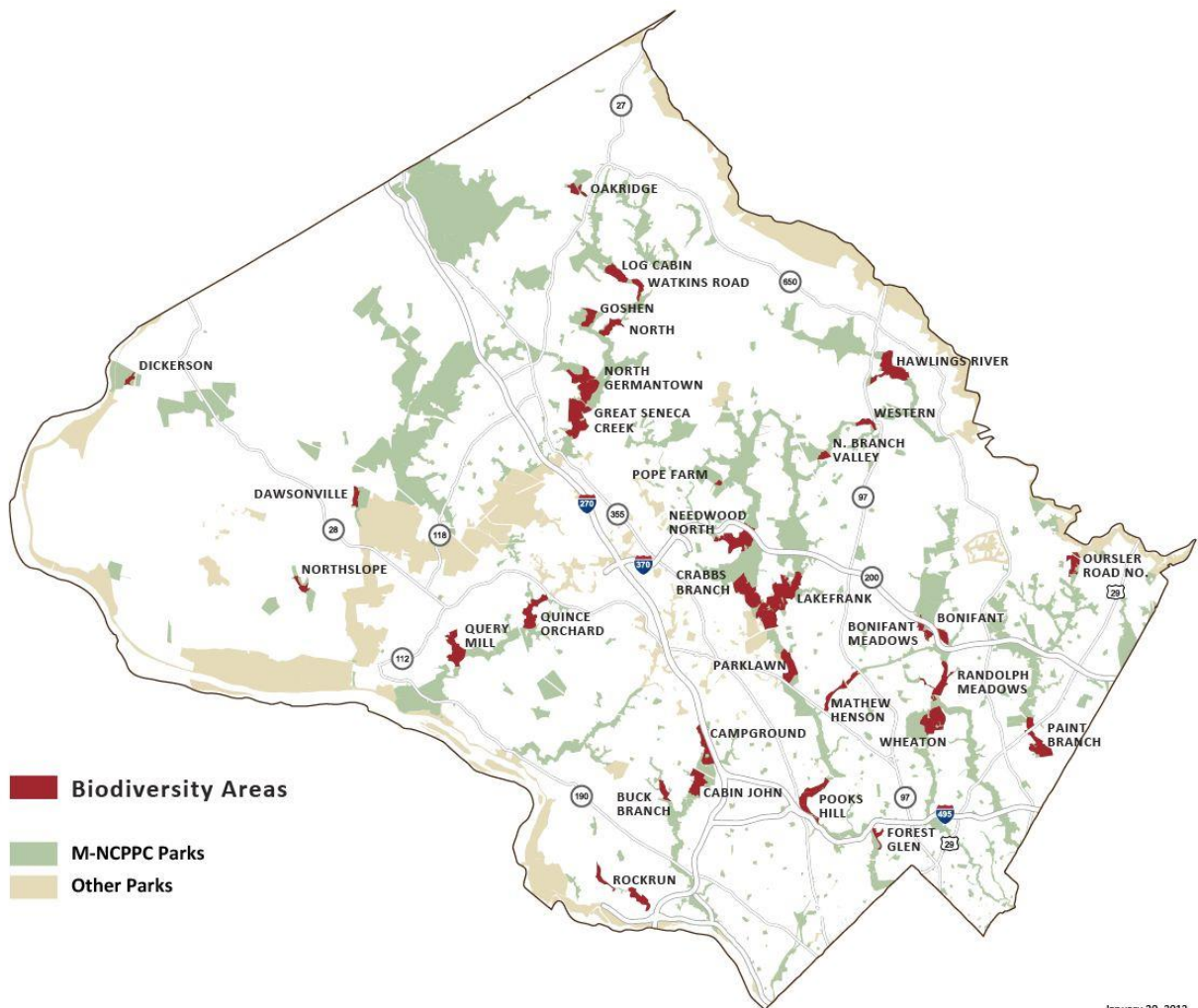
The overall standards for management, protection and interpretation of these Priority Natural Resource Areas include:

- Prioritize the protection of Priority Natural Resource Areas to the greatest extent possible through conservation and preservation efforts

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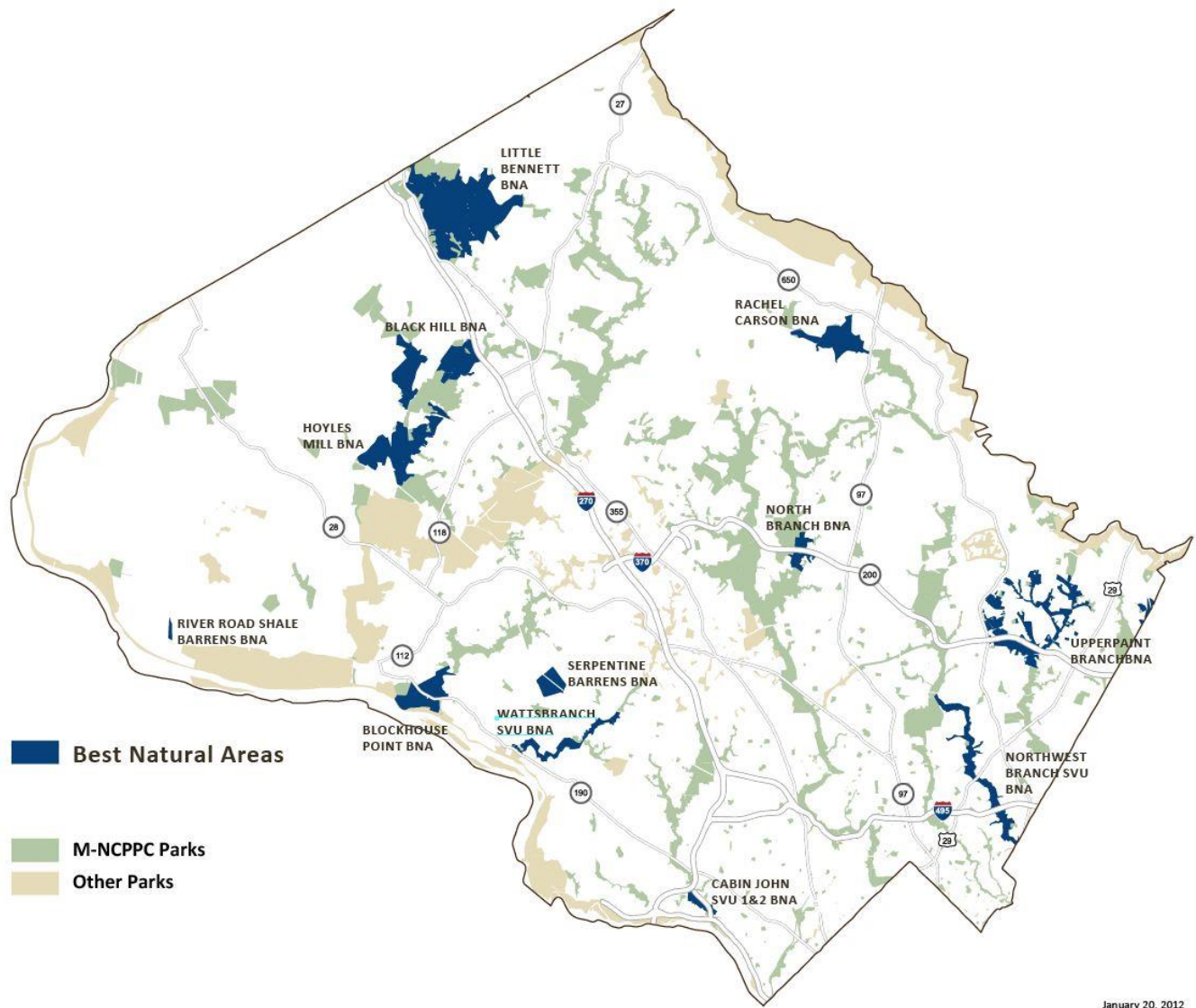
- Maintain Priority Natural Resource Areas in various stages of natural succession and free of Non-Native Invasive (NNI) plant species, thereby maximizing biodiversity and well as providing sites for high-quality natural resource-based recreation.
- With the exception of trails, trailheads and associated parking, prohibit development of new park facilities within Priority Natural Resource Areas.
- Remove existing park facilities from Environmentally Sensitive Areas during redevelopment projects whenever feasible and appropriate; when removal or relocation is not feasible, minimize impacts to environmental resources to the maximum extent practicable.
- Interpret the ecological significance of these areas for the public's benefit and enjoyment and to ensure ongoing public advocacy for natural resource stewardship efforts.

Figure 15 - Biodiversity Areas Map, NRMP 2013.



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Figure 16 - Best Natural Areas Map, NRMP 2013.



PLAN FOR NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

A variety of planning processes and approved plans and policies contribute to the conservation of natural resources in existing and future parkland in Montgomery County. Significant protection of Natural Resources in the County is accomplished through PROS Plans and through adopted area land use master plans that implement the *General Plan*. Natural resource recommendations in those comprehensive plans are based on countywide and large area inventories and studies that are broad in scope. More detailed analyses are often conducted for areas of proposed natural resource parkland in area master plans.

Based on the thorough natural resources research, analysis and categorization of park natural resources described in the section above, park planning efforts are initiated to organize resource management efforts throughout the park system. Park natural resource planning has been done countywide, as in the case of the countywide *Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP, 2013)* and is also regularly completed for specific parks on a more detailed basis.

Countywide Natural Resource Management Plan

As described above, the *Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP, 2013)* identifies ten Major Terrestrial Habitats found in Montgomery County plus other significant habitat features (see *Figure 14-Map of Major Terrestrial Natural Communities of Montgomery County, Maryland*). In addition to defining these habitat types, the *2013 NRMP* provides overarching guidance to park staff for the management of the approximately 26,000 acres of Natural Areas in parks. The overall guidance of the NRMP is to protect the best examples of each habitat type in various stages of natural succession to maximize biodiversity.

While deciduous-dominated forest is the natural mature, or climax, condition in this part of Maryland, it is critical to biodiversity to maintain or create areas of successional habitat to mimic conditions prior to modern human settlement. These successional areas, including grasslands/meadows, scrub-shrub areas and conifer-dominated forest, provide a constantly changing mix of flora and fauna that are affected by the prior land disturbance, available light and hydrology. Each successional stage also makes changes to the soils that ultimately enable land to support a mature deciduous forest. Without each stage, biodiversity won't be preserved. These stages can be maintained or created through a variety of resource management programs, as described later in this chapter.

Preserving examples of major habitat types, micro habitat features and early successional habitats is necessary to maximize species diversity and biological integrity amongst native plant and wildlife across the County. Many of the best examples of each Terrestrial Habitat are included within the aforementioned Priority Natural Resource Areas (especially BNAs and BDAs). Categorizing parkland into these ten Terrestrial Habitats provides the baseline for assigning appropriate methods to manage resources and assists with determining where to focus active resource management efforts.

Park-Specific Plans

Two types of park-specific plans are created to guide development and management of parkland and contribute to the conservation of natural resources in parks. Park Master Plans and Operation and Use Plans provide more specific stewardship and management guidance to park managers than the

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comprehensive plans and the *Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP, 2013)* due to their park-specific focus.

PARK MASTER PLANS

Park Master Plans are prepared for Countywide Parks either soon after acquisition or when funds are anticipated for significant park improvements. The park master plans specify areas for protection, restoration and development, plus outline the general layout of facilities and trail alignments. They are prepared through a process similar to area land use master plans with significant public outreach and input opportunities, although the final approval is given to park master plans by the Montgomery County Planning Board instead of proceeding to the Montgomery County Council. A briefing of the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee of the County Council typically follows Planning Board approval.

OPERATION AND USE PLANS

Operation and Use (O&U) Plans are practical management-oriented documents that provide day-to-day operational guidance to Park staff on natural resources, cultural resources, public access and trails, and other park operational issues. O&U Plans are drafted in stand-alone documents for each of these operational areas (i.e., separate documents for natural resources, cultural resources, etc) due to the separate demands and work programs of divisions of Parks. The O&U Plans will work together to provide operational guidance to park managers. The goal is for all parks with significant natural resources (BNAs and BDAs) and for principal down-county stream valley parks to have a completed O&U Plan for all Natural Areas.

In addition to priority parks, operational planning is also under development for newly-acquired parkland containing significant natural areas. O&U Plans for new parkland often include the Natural Areas and the Public Access and Trails documents. The planning for these new parks must not only assist in preserving the natural resources through proper operation and maintenance recommendations, but also identify how those new natural resource-oriented parks will be made accessible in an appropriate manner to the public, specifically through trail recommendations. Recommendations for future interpretive programming and/or signage are also usually included in the O&U Plan for Public Access and Trails.

A key component of all the O&U Plans for Natural Resources is the Natural Resource Management (NRM) Map. The NRM Map is developed within the framework of the *Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP, 2013)* referenced above. These park-specific NRM Maps provide practical and detailed guidance for the protection, management and enhancement of each individual park's natural resources using standardized protocols and mapping symbols for management of various resource types. The NRM Map identifies and describes the natural resources of the park in detail, identifies and addresses key issues, and provides detailed stewardship and management recommendations. NRM Maps should be reviewed on a regular basis and revised as necessary to best manage the resource.

IMPLEMENT AND COMPLY WITH POLICIES, LAWS, AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Many laws, regulations, and programs work to conserve natural resources in the County, both within and outside of parkland. Department of Parks and Department of Planning staff, as well as many other County agencies, use these regulations and guidelines not only to review the impacts of planned development on parkland or elsewhere in the County, but also to protect natural resources through recommendations written in park, local, and area master plans. This section is a brief summary of the most important of these efforts that are implemented via the development review process, focused on water quality conservation, or related to development taking place on parkland.

Development Review Process

Montgomery County has many regulatory requirements put in place to protect the County's natural resources during the land development process. Measures including Erosion and Sediment Control permits, Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineations (NRI/FSD), Forest Conservation Plans, and Water Quality Plans (for projects planned in one of the County's five Special Protection Areas) are just some of the key requirements that protect natural resources.

FOREST CONSERVATION ACT

Once the zoning, land use and park acquisition boundaries are set in a land use master plan and accompanying zoning map amendments, individual developments are subject to review for compliance with the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law and the Planning Board's Environmental Guidelines. These programs comprehensively protect most environmentally sensitive features on sites when development projects (both public and private) are submitted to the Planning Board. The County Forest Conservation Act, adopted pursuant to the State legislation, regulates efforts to preserve forest and tree canopy through the development process, including the development of parkland.

Forest Conservation requirements on private and non-park public development projects contribute to the large amount of sensitive areas and forest that are conveyed to the park system through the development review process. On land that is not appropriate for transfer to Parks, a Forest Conservation easement is placed on land to protect existing forest or newly planted forest on properties under development. A Category I Conservation easement does not allow disturbance of the canopy or understory except to control non-native invasive species. This type of easement is used most frequently to protect natural areas that remain on private land. They are legally recorded in the land records and M-NCPPC, Montgomery Planning Department provides enforcement.

For development of active recreational facilities on parkland, the same forest conservation requirements apply. Forest that is to be permanently preserved as a result of a park development project is identified on the Final Forest Conservation Plan that is approved and enforced by the M-NCPPC, Montgomery Planning Department.

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

The document *Environmental Guidelines: Guidelines for Environmental Management of Development in Montgomery County* (2002) defines the objectives, principles and policies to protect sensitive areas through which development projects are to be reviewed and approved by the Montgomery County

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Planning Board. M-NCPPC's Environmental Guidelines provide specific guidance for protecting environmentally sensitive areas on public and private land proposed for development. The Montgomery County Planning Board approved these guidelines in 1983 and revised them in 1997. The Guidelines establish a procedure for identification and protection of natural resources potentially affected by construction, and they apply to all Sensitive Areas as initially defined by Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland (see definition above, under Definitions and Criteria for Identifying Key Environmental Resources). The Guidelines ensure that development plans give adequate consideration to the following environmental management objectives: protection of stream water quality, water supply reservoirs, steep slopes, forest conservation, wildlife habitat and exemplary natural communities including rare, threatened, and endangered species; maintenance of biologically viable and diverse streams and wetlands; reduction of flood problems; protection against development hazards on areas prone to flooding, soil instability, etc.; and provision of visual amenities and areas for recreation and outdoor education activities.

In areas where the land use planned is considered a potential risk in high quality watersheds, the area may be designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) through an act of the Montgomery County Council. Proposed development in an SPA requires that a water quality plan be prepared that incorporates redundant stormwater management facilities and other features that address the particular goals for the receiving waterway. Among other requirements, wider wetland buffers and accelerated reforestation are required in these areas. In some SPAs, overlay zones are adopted to limit imperviousness to specific levels on each site and limit or prohibit certain land uses that pose a risk to water quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN MASTER PLANS

Complementary to regulatory and guideline compliance, recommendations regarding natural resources in the various land use master plans provide input to natural resource protection during the development review process in front of the Planning Board. In addition, some land use developments are subject to a finding of conformance to the relevant land use master plan. Many large developments are subject to Site Plan review requirements under the County zoning ordinance, a more detailed plan review process than traditional subdivision review. Before the Montgomery County Planning Board can approve such a development, one of the required findings is to find conformance with the land use master plan recommendations that affect the property. As such, overall goals and objectives and property-specific recommendations related to natural resource protection in adopted land use master plans, while more general than regulations and guidelines in nature, still must be addressed during a development project and provide a significant tool for protection of natural resources in the County.

OTHER LOCAL POLICIES

The *Green Infrastructure Network Map and Enhancement Strategy* is a countywide conceptual network map of existing and potentially connectable natural areas developed by the Planning Department and available on the Department website. This document also includes strategies that can be implemented to improve the network of green infrastructure throughout the County. The Green Infrastructure Network Map is intended to serve as an additional source of information in the implementation of the County's green infrastructure-related policies, plans, regulations, and programs.

Water Quality Regulatory Compliance and Conservation Programs

Many programs are implemented in Montgomery County by the County agencies and the Commission to support water quality conservation efforts and comply with a myriad of regulatory requirements, some implemented directly by agencies and some implemented via the development review process. Changes to Federal, state and county water quality regulations over the past decade have resulted in significant shifts to the goals and methods by which the Commission and other property owners protect water quality for their existing and new developments.

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEMS (NPDES) COMPLIANCE

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks, Montgomery County (Montgomery Parks) received a *Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)* permit in late 2009. This permit requires Montgomery Parks to develop and implement best management practices under six minimum control measures which include: Personnel Education and Outreach, Public Involvement and Participation, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Construction Site Runoff Control, Post Construction Stormwater Management, and Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping. Practices implemented under these minimum control measures serve to reduce or eliminate sources of stormwater pollution on parkland in Montgomery County.

Prior to the Phase II MS4 permit, Montgomery Parks received an *NPDES Industrial Permit* for its twelve maintenance yards. This permit, received in the 1990's and still in force today, requires Parks to train staff, adopt best management practices, develop pollution prevention plans, and improve facilities to reduce stormwater pollution from these sites. Progress in meeting the requirements of this industrial permit is reported annually in combination with the Phase II permit.

Montgomery County has a *Phase I MS4 NPDES* permit which includes a requirement to treat an additional 20% of untreated stormwater every five-year permit cycle. Because Montgomery Parks is largely a stream valley park system, many of the County's stormwater management facilities and stream restoration projects are either currently or proposed to be on parkland. Parks works with the County and other NPDES permittees on reviewing and permitting these projects on parkland.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

Montgomery County has continually updated the requirements for Sediment and Erosion Control and Stormwater Management based on state of the art techniques and State of Maryland policy direction. This program resides in the County Department of Permitting Services and includes an aggressive inspection program. The County collects a water quality protection charge to support maintenance of stormwater management facilities. Privately owned facilities that meet certain standards may be maintained by the Department of Environmental Protection via this funding source.

WATERSHED RESTORATION PROGRAMS

The M-NCPPC has a long and effective history of collaborating with local, state and federal agencies to focus on protecting and restoring the County's watersheds. Federal and state regulations and programs (such as the Clean Water Act and the Chesapeake Bay Program) spurred many interagency watershed cleanup efforts since the 1980's, including the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Program and Patuxent

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River cleanup efforts. Over the years, the Departments of Parks and Planning have supported implementation of the Patuxent River Primary Management Area (PMA) and the State's Tributary Strategy Teams for the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers, among other programs. The Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS) was developed in the early 1990's (by Montgomery County DEP in collaboration with Montgomery Parks) to provide detailed information about water quality in the County to be able to target County and interagency restoration and protection efforts to the most important watersheds.

Today, watershed restoration efforts are primarily driven by two recent federal/state mandates: the NPDES requirements and the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load, a measure of pollution entering waterways) requirements. The NPDES permits of the Parks Department and the County prioritize restoration efforts on the most impacted waterways in the most developed portions of the County. For the Parks Department, our compliance with the Chesapeake Bay TMDL requirements is through our Phase II NPDES permit compliance.

Currently, the County has a significant Watershed Restoration Program to address the impacts of development approved prior to environmental regulations under the guidance of the County Phase I NPDES permit. The County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) evaluates watersheds to determine existing problems and the feasibility of stormwater retrofit projects and stream restoration. Eligible projects are selected based on feasibility, potential for stream improvements, cost and funding availability. Watershed plans have been completed for the Paint Branch, Hawlings River, Rock Creek, Cabin John, Watts Branch and Northwest Branch. Each year, selected priority restoration projects from these watershed plans are implemented by the County DEP. Due to the significant percent of streams in the County occurring in stream valley parks, many of the County watershed restoration projects are implemented on parkland.

In addition to restoration driven by regulatory requirements, the Parks Department directly implements a variety of watershed restoration projects via Parks' capital budget to support development of park facilities and address specific erosion and watershed damage in new and existing parkland, and to improve water quality and overall natural resources condition. The level-of-effort project in the CIP is typically funded at a level of \$500 thousand per year, enough to annually fund one to two stream restoration projects and approximately 5 to 10 smaller improvement projects. A complete stream restoration project will typically address multiple erosion and related issues for a designated stream reach, often including the reforming and stabilizing of the channel and banks, providing fish passage, and replanting riparian vegetation. Smaller watershed restoration projects may include riparian restoration after bridge or culvert construction, repair of erosion associated with storm drain outfalls, small wetland or floodplain improvements, or forest planting along stream edges.

Park Conservation Policies: Review of Development on Parkland

With 36,820 acres of parkland (at the time of this report), our parks receive significant pressure from development—both internal and external.

PARK FACILITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Internally, the department is constantly developing new and retrofitting existing parks, and dealing with the aging infrastructure that comes with being an older park system. We protect sensitive natural resources by not only complying with Federal, State and County laws and regulations, including those described above, but with a set of park policies and procedures as well.

One standard step in planning for development on parkland is to utilize a Resource Atlas GIS map that shows all the sensitive natural and cultural resources on the site. The Resource Atlas assessment is used at the very beginning of the site selection and planning process for new park facilities and retrofits of existing facilities, thus ensuring a consistent set of data is being used for decision-making and resource impact evaluation. Using these data, as well as numerous field walks, park ecologists are able to better analyze the true impacts of the proposed project and determine how best to protect the resource.

Another important Park policy that affects the review and design of park projects is the standards set in this document for management and preservation of the Priority Natural Resource Areas as described in the section above. Here is a reiteration of those standards:

- Prioritize the protection of Priority Natural Resource Areas to the greatest extent possible through conservation and preservation efforts
- Maintain Priority Natural Resource Areas in various stages of natural succession and free of Non-Native Invasive (NNI) plant species, thereby maximizing biodiversity and well as providing sites for high-quality natural resource-based recreation.
- With the exception of trails, trailheads and associated parking, prohibit development of new park facilities within Priority Natural Resource Areas.
- Remove existing park facilities from Environmentally Sensitive Areas during redevelopment projects whenever feasible and appropriate; when removal or relocation is not feasible, minimize impacts to environmental resources to the maximum extent practicable.
- Interpret the ecological significance of these areas for the public's benefit and enjoyment and to ensure ongoing public advocacy for natural resource stewardship efforts.

NON-PARK GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT THAT IMPACTS PARKLAND

Projects proposed to impact parkland by external government agencies (e.g., WSSC, MCDOT, MD SHA, MCPS) must go through a slightly more rigorous process than internal development projects. In addition to ensuring that projects abide by the above mentioned Federal, State and County policies, laws and regulations, staff goes a step further to ensure the stewardship of natural resources. Projects must first go through a concept review stage where park staff work with the applicant to understand the scope of the work, if the impacts to parkland are unavoidable or minimizable, and if not, what the mitigation or compensation will be for that impact. See the discussion of the Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, Compensate policy in Chapter 2. The "Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, Compensate" policy is critical to protecting natural resources in Parks and across the County, and is a key tool during project reviews with external agencies to balance the varying needs of the public.

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Many of these external agency projects then go before the Montgomery Planning Board for a state - required Mandatory Referral review whereby park staff recommend approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the project. For projects that do not result in park impacts, the Mandatory Referral decision is advisory in nature. However, in the case of projects that impacts parkland, the Planning Board is determining whether to accept the impact to park property that is under their control – in which case their decision is binding.

After Mandatory Referral approval (or in the case where no Mandatory Referral is necessary, after concept review), detailed plans for the project are submitted to the Park Development Division in an application for a Park Construction Permit. The Park Development Division issues Park Construction Permits to approve all work by non-Park entities to be done on properties owned or managed by the M-NCPPC and on properties to be dedicated to the M-NCPPC after the completion of a development project. Reviews of proposed work are provided to check plans for technical accuracy and minimization of impacts to the park properties prior to the issuance of a Park Construction Permit. A Park Construction Permit must be issued prior to the commencement of any work by outside entities on property owned, managed or being dedicated to the M-NCPPC.

In concert with the many policies already discussed, the Parks Department has several documented policies with detailed guidance to assist with the protection of natural resources. These guidance documents are used by Parks for internal construction projects and also provided to Park Construction Permit applicants for use in their development plans on parkland. Two examples of such guidance documents include:

- Planting Requirements for Land Disturbing Activities and Related Mitigation on M-NCPPC, Montgomery County Parkland (revised 2009)
- Guidelines for Converting Paved Areas into Pervious Greenspace

IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES

M-NCPPC is responsible for the protection and management of all natural resources within county parkland. As the primary public landowner in the county, this responsibility often serves a larger countywide function. Natural Resources Stewardship staff develop and implement resource management plans, programs, guidelines and Best Management Practices in order to protect and enhance park resources, and assist with implementation of Federal, State and local plans for conservation of Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species and critical habitats. A selection of the most critical programs is described here.

Vegetation Management Programs

The benefits of a healthy and diverse plant community are multiple and significant, leading to the importance of vegetation management programs. Significant vegetation assemblages are often determinant of critical wildlife habitats essential within the coastal plain and piedmont physiographic regions. Preserving habitats in the various stages of vegetative succession is key to providing the necessary habitat for diverse wildlife communities. Vegetative succession in Montgomery County goes through several distinct stages, including meadows/grasslands, scrub-shrub, conifer-dominated forest, then deciduous-dominated forest. Each stage in this succession process is important to providing habitat to different associated species, thus the importance to overall biodiversity of maintaining heterogeneous areas across the natural areas of Parks.

Vegetation management programs are devised and implemented in an attempt to maximize ecological function and heterogeneity, to provide clean air and water, and to provide connectivity for species distribution of both flora and fauna. Management recommendations are guided by all the research and analysis acquired through inventory, monitoring and prediction efforts as described above. Overall guidance for vegetation management comes from the *Comprehensive Vegetation Management Plan for M-NCPPC Parkland (April 2009)*. Specific programs as described next support the management of park forest resources and meadow resources.

FOREST

Forest is the primary vegetation type in Natural Areas in Montgomery Parks. In addition to the many policies and regulations that support preservation and expansion of forest, Parks takes direct action to preserve, manage and expand forest on parkland. Through the guidance in *Planting Requirements for Land Disturbing Activities*, development projects by private and public agencies result in afforestation (new forest) and reforestation (replacement forest) being planted in appropriate areas within Parks. Park planning recommendations contained within Park Master Plans, Operation & Use Plans, and even within land use master plans also result in areas of parks where forest is planted. Newly acquired parkland is often reviewed during initial planning to identify appropriate locations for supplemental planting to improve existing forest and for planting additional forest to protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas such as streams and wetlands.

As a result of these multiple efforts to restore and plant new forest, more than 100,000 trees have been planted across 500 acres of parkland since 2000.

MEADOWS, GRASSLANDS AND SCRUB-SHRUB VEGETATION

Since natural disturbances that create meadows and grasslands (such as fire or beaver activity) are mostly absent in a suburban landscape, there is a significant shortage of these vegetation types in Montgomery County. The Parks Department manages some of our natural areas to remain permanently in various stages of secondary plant succession to address this lack of diversity. By preserving some natural areas in grassland and scrub-shrub stages using appropriate protocols, the maximum diversity of plant habitats can be provided across the County to support wildlife diversity. Grasslands management dedicates natural areas in suspended succession to support specific plant and wildlife species.

The Department of Parks has identified a goal to maintain 10% of its natural areas as grasslands. Currently, grasslands make up approximately 3500 acres of the park system, enough meadows to come close to meeting that goal.

Wildlife Management Programs

Wildlife is managed for public safety, regulatory compliance, biodiversity and sustainability, and in accordance with human land uses and priorities. Management programs are focused on providing habitat necessary to maximize species diversity in sustainable abundance, as discussed in the vegetation management section above. Hands-on wildlife management programs also create artificial habitat otherwise unavailable in the County for certain species. Most of the additional effort in wildlife management focuses on the addressing the nuisance impacts of certain wildlife on citizens and parkland.

WHITE-TAILED DEER

Montgomery Parks is charged to lead the Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group, a multi-agency and citizen entity that produces annual reports to guide county-wide implementation of the *Comprehensive Management Plan for White-tailed Deer in Montgomery County, Maryland (1995)*. Subject to the guidance in the management plan and the annual reports, Montgomery Parks implements a comprehensive management program for White-Tailed Deer.

The White-tailed Deer Management Program addresses county-wide impacts of deer including deer-vehicle collisions, over-browsing of natural vegetation, damage to agriculture and ornamental landscapes, and communicable disease. Montgomery Parks has active deer population control occurring on approximately 19,000 of its 37,000 acres, over 50% of all parkland. Multiple control efforts are utilized to manage the population, including Archery, Cooperative, Lottery and Tenant-based Managed Deer Hunting and Park Police-based Sharpshooting Programs.

Additionally, since M-NCPPC is charged to address county-wide White-tailed Deer impacts such as deer-vehicle collisions and manage the countywide deer population inventory, some program efforts occur on all parkland and outside of parkland. Deer inventory data is gathered across the County in all park types, even those that are not currently used for active deer control efforts, and in other public and privately held lands not within stewardship authority of M-NCPPC to fully understand the population dynamics in the entire county.

NUISANCE WILDLIFE

Other wildlife can come into conflict with the preferred uses or desired vegetation on parkland, land use goals, or can cause damage to structures and other facilities on parkland resulting in safety, regulatory compliance and maintenance impacts. An example of such wildlife is the year-round resident Canada Goose population that impacts the condition of artificial and natural ponds, streams, and grass-based recreational facilities such as athletic fields and golf courses. Another native wildlife species that can come into conflict with human uses and desires is beavers. Beavers are a valued native mammal that contributes to the varied successional habitats across forest and stream ecosystems. However, in certain highly developed areas of the County, such in the southern county stream valley parks, beavers can construct dams that cause flooding of park facilities and can kill significant numbers of trees in parks where every tree is valued for habitat, shade and landscape benefits. Another common example of nuisance wildlife is groundhogs whose underground burrows can cause damage to park buildings, especially historic structures that may be located far from active park use areas.

Park natural resource management staff run a series of efforts to actively manage these and other nuisance wildlife when they come into conflict with Parks and other desired goals or conditions. These efforts may utilize a variety of techniques to address the issue including public education aimed to build understanding and tolerance, harassment and exclusion of nuisance animals, and population management efforts such as egg addling and trapping of nuisance animals.

Non-Native Species Management Programs

Non-native species management is designated to sustain populations of native flora and fauna, through address of species identified as non-indigenous of the physiographic region. These invaders include terrestrial and aquatic species of flora and fauna. Examples of common invasive plants include Oriental Bittersweet, Porcelainberry and English Ivy vines and Japanese Honeysuckle and Japanese Barberry shrubs. Examples of common invasive animals include Gypsy Moth and Emerald Ash Borer Beetle, Spiny Softshell Turtle and Snakehead fish.

NNI PLANT MANAGEMENT

Non-Native Invasive (NNI) Plant management is guided by the *Best Management Practices for Control of Non-Native Invasive Plants* (and intended to protect native species within areas identified as key environmental resources for the purpose of enhancing public health and safety, ecosystem function, and biodiversity. Management efforts include mechanical and chemical treatment by staff and contractors, and mechanical removal by volunteers. Over 130 units of parkland have received treatment for NNI removal over the past ten years.

NNI ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Programs to address invasive insects and other animals are conducted on an as-needed basis and focus on preventing the spread and/or mitigating the impacts of the invasive species. Currently, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Program is addressing the significant damage to ash trees from the now widespread invasive beetle. Ash trees are present in the forest canopy across the park system and also in many landscaped areas. To address the primary goal of safety for park patrons, staff and property, this program assesses and prioritizes ash trees infested with EAB and removes the ash trees at highest risk of failure as determined by trained arborists. trees infested with EAB and removes the ash trees at highest

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risk of failure as determined by trained arborists. Gypsy Moth populations are assessed annually on parkland, by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, and managed as necessary for maintenance below established thresholds.

Volunteer Programs

Montgomery Parks has a strong Volunteer Services Office that coordinates tens of thousands of hours of volunteer assistance via more than 35 program areas throughout the parks, including several programs that assist with natural resource management issues. Key examples include the Weed Warrior Program, Natural Surface Trail Program, and the Stream and Park Cleanup Program which are highlighted below. Volunteers also support the Deer Management Program and assist in the planting and care of trees and other native plants in parks.

WEED WARRIOR PROGRAM

Since its inception in 1999, Montgomery Park's Weed Warrior Program has trained more than 1200 citizens in non-native, invasive plant identification and removal techniques. Now in its 18th year, the program has more than 600 active volunteers who contribute approximately 5000 hours of volunteer service in our parks annually. Once trained, Weed Warrior volunteers are permitted to work independently anywhere on park property on their own schedule. Specially-trained Weed Warrior Supervisors and park staff also lead more than 100 group workdays per year to tackle larger infestations and provide opportunities for untrained volunteers and outside groups to help control non-native, invasive plants in our parks.

STREAM AND PARK CLEANUP PROGRAMS

The volunteer park cleanup program provides a significant level of support to help keep parks and streams clear of trash and debris. Since 2012, more than 25,000 volunteers have contributed approximately 70,000 hours to keeping Montgomery Parks' streams and parks clean. This volunteer program has been steadily increasing in participation levels and trash removed since 2011. In a typical recent year, volunteers from more than 100 groups and organizations take part in around 250 cleanup projects coordinated by Parks staff and remove about 72 tons of trash from parkland.

PRIORITIZE AND PROTECT COUNTYWIDE NATURAL RESOURCES

In addition to the many programs that protect and improve the natural resources within the park system, the Department of Parks implements and supports efforts to conserve diverse, critical habitat features across the entire County. These countywide assessment and implementation efforts are a key element of fulfilling the Mission, Vision and Values of the Department of Parks.

ASSESS AND PRIORITIZE NATURAL RESOURCES FOR CONSERVATION

Dating back to its creation in 1927, the Commission has implemented many efforts to protect the most important natural resources in Montgomery County, preserving stream valleys, forest and other greenspace necessary to water and air quality. For the past three decades, the Department of Parks has spearheaded assessments of Countywide environmental resources to identify the most important and unique ecosystems in the County, monitor their condition, and make recommendations on how to preserve those resources. These efforts were largely initiated with a study published in 1986 that evaluated a process for Natural Resource Planning and Management for a conference appropriately

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titled “Urban Planning to Benefit Wildlife and People”. Subsequent research conducted in Montgomery County resulted in a prediction methodology for impacts on wildlife of development and land use decisions]. Subsequent studies in the 1990’s identified the most important ecosystems in the County based on unique geological, soil and vegetative conditions.

Significant natural resources within the County then are evaluated and prioritized for protection efforts in a variety of planning and policy documents. During area master plan development, detailed assessments are conducted of resources in smaller portions of County. Those targeted studies result in the identification of priority resources and protection recommendations within community master and sector plans.

Significant natural resources are sometimes studied individually, such as the Upper Paint Branch watershed that serves as cold-water trout habitat. Since the 1980’s, several studies of this watershed have been conducted by Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) jointly with the Commission that have resulted in many areas of the watershed being identified for conservation efforts.

On a countywide basis, the *Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan* (M-NCPPC, 2001) established a program to conserve Montgomery County’s most significant open spaces. The LOS Functional Master Plan developed criteria to identify the most important unprotected natural resources, greenway corridors along stream valleys, and water supply protection areas in the Patuxent River watershed. (See Chapter 2 for all open space categories in the LOS plan.) The resource analysis in this 2001 plan built upon the earlier local area, countywide and statewide assessments of natural resources, including the State’s Green Infrastructure maps, and created criteria for identifying the “best of the best” natural resources in the County.

APPLY VARIETY OF TOOLS TO CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES

Once countywide natural resource sites are identified and prioritized, different tools can be applied to protect those resources. Many important resources can be preserved on private land through the development review process that is implemented by the Planning Department with input from the Department of Parks. Regulatory tools that can protect resources for the long term include:

- Zoning regulations, such as required percentages of open space, cluster development and reduced lot sizes, and other requirements of the zoning code
- Forest Conservation Act regulations, including placing conservation easements on forested land
- Stormwater management regulations
- Special Protection Area regulations, including Water Quality Plans

The Planning and Parks Departments also support other public and private sector efforts that preserve resources on privately held land. These programs include forest banking, private land trust easements, agricultural easements, and other tools for conserving private land.

ACQUIRE PRIORITY PARKLAND FOR NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

In addition to the general criteria for new parkland acquisitions (see Chapter 2), selection of the most important natural resource sites for acquisition includes using the inventory, monitoring and prediction

methods described above, looking at existing recommendations for natural resource parkland, and applying adopted criteria to evaluate resources (such as in the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan and Vision 2030). Staff ecologists play a key role in evaluating environmental value of properties being considered for park acquisition. The addition to parks of important new natural resource concentrations and key areas of buffer habitat around existing natural resources on parkland both serve to conserve natural resources and provide access to those resources for public enjoyment and education. Acquisition of property for primarily natural resources purposes typically meets one of three main purposes:

- Land suitable to expand public ownership of high quality resources adjacent to existing Priority Natural Resource Areas within Parks (especially BDAs and BNAs).
- Land suitable to buffer and protect existing Priority Natural Resource Areas within Parks that may include areas of less than superior natural resources.
- Opportunities to conserve and provide public access to unique or exemplary natural communities or large areas of quality, diverse habitats as new Priority Natural Resource Areas.

Note that many parkland acquisitions occur for reasons other than the quality of the land's natural resources that do include land with natural resources of varying quality. Decisions to acquire land for parks, as opposed to using other resource protection tools with the land remaining in private ownership, is a complex analysis of many factors and natural resource conservation is often only one of many factors in consideration.

Acquisition of natural resources into the park system is accomplished by either dedication during the development review process or by direct purchase from property owners.

ACQUISITION VIA DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Environmentally Sensitive Areas and other quality natural areas are often transferred to park ownership from the development of land. The amount of land conveyed to Parks through this process varies with the zone, land use master plan recommendations, and the size and quality of the resources on the land being developed. Significant areas of the stream valley park system have been acquired through this development process over the previous decades. In fact, sometimes land that is not required to be conveyed to Parks by subdivision regulation is given to Parks by the landowner as a less expensive option than creating a Home Owners Association to monitor and maintain the land. Land received through dedication often falls into the first two purposes above, serving to expand or buffer existing Priority Natural Resource Areas.

ACQUISITION VIA DIRECT PURCHASE

Direct purchase of properties is accomplished through the acquisition program that is described in Chapter 2. Direct acquisitions can meet all three of the purposes listed above. As the County continues to develop and redevelop and the park acquisition program makes progress, the number of highest quality natural resource concentrations that should be added to the Park System is steadily reducing. Over future years, priority natural resource acquisitions will continue to shift from a focus on protecting new Priority Natural Resource Areas to expanding and buffering the Priority Natural Resource Areas Parks already is responsible for stewarding.

The County's commitment to open space and natural resource conservation in rural, suburban, and urban areas is shown through the significant local financial support of the Legacy Open Space acquisition program to date, totaling over \$70 Million in County and Commission funds since 2000. See Appendix 4 for a list of priority parkland acquisitions identified in current adopted plans including natural resources sites.

EDUCATE CITIZENS AND STAFF ABOUT NATURAL RESOURCES

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan recommended that the Department of Parks develop an environmental literacy program for County residents of all ages that fosters a fundamental understanding of the systems of the natural world, the relationships and interactions between the living and non-living environment, and the ability to deal sensibly with complex issues that involve weighing scientific evidence, uncertainty and economic, aesthetic and ethical considerations. This section discusses progress toward the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* goal that recommends environmental stewardship training for all Parks staff and public programming that supports Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Maryland State environmental literacy standards.

Interpretive Programs for Adults and Children

The future success of our stewardship efforts depends on an engaged citizenry who accurately interpret scientific data, understand the impact of human actions on the environment, and are committed to support conservation activities in their own lives and throughout our community. The Parks Department provides interpretive programs, curriculum based school programs, and community engagement efforts that connect knowledgeable Parks staff with current environmental stewards and help to develop future leaders. Montgomery Parks' four nature centers, Black Hill, Brookside, Locust Grove and Meadowside, and two public gardens, Brookside and McCrillis, are the facilities by which our agency provides formal and informal programs in the fields of horticulture, environmental education and natural history interpretation.

ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

The State of Maryland is a national and international leader in environmental literacy. Building on past accomplishments and to support Montgomery County Schools in meeting the Maryland Environmental Literacy Graduation Requirement, Montgomery Parks will continue to offer free curriculum-based school programs for all K-12 Montgomery County public schools, independent schools and home school groups, thereby overcoming the financial barrier that keeps some student populations from regular access to environmental education. With proposed additional staffing, Parks will increase frequency of programming with individual classes and schools, strengthening the relationship between students and nature by deepening their understanding of the natural world through more in depth and multiple programs over the course of the school year.

CHILDREN IN NATURE

Many studies have shown that regular access to nature improves physical and mental health, motor skills, cognitive functions, and helps form conservation values, knowledge and behaviors. At the same time, children are spending more time inside with electronic devices and less time outside. The State's *2014 LPPRP* noted that youth participation in outdoor recreation is strongly influenced by parents, family, friends and relatives. Providing welcoming facilities for a diversity of groups with convenient

hours, engaging interpretive exhibits, stimulating programs and trails that link to local neighborhoods and schools make for an experience that is safe, enjoyable and accessible. Interpretive exhibits provide a robust learning experience for drop-in visitors who may not be able to attend regular programs, address the needs of people with disabilities who may have difficulty navigating outdoor trails, and communicate conservation messages to multilingual audiences who represent the diversity of our community.

In addition to visitor centers and programs, park patrons can learn more about natural and cultural history from interpretive signage in many park access locations and along nature trails. The past ten years have seen an increase in installation of interpretive signage throughout the park system to educate the public and create good stewards of the natural environment.

ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Montgomery County is home to some of the most ethnically diverse areas in the country. The 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, a multi-state agreement, recognizes in its Diversity Outcome Management Strategy, the need to engage underrepresented and underserved communities to provide input, make decisions, and take action to conserve and restore our natural resources. The Agreement's definition of diversity includes "...a wide range of people of all races, income levels, faiths, genders, ages, sexual orientations and disabilities, along with other diverse groups." Our programming, engagement efforts and staffing should mirror the demographics of our community and ensure that all people have access to the benefits of local parks.

Future plans include:

- Increased cultural competency training so existing staff can better understand, communicate with, and plan programming for a wide range of people
 - A focus on participation by youth from communities of color in educational programs, volunteer positions and job opportunities.
 - Development of a green jobs pipelines to encourage youth from middle school, high school and college to consider careers in the horticulture and conservation fields, in alignment with Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature Action Plan 2016-17
 - Development of educational programs, interpretive exhibits and events that draw inspiration from the rich cultural heritages of our community.

Staff Training and Education

The Parks Department conducts training for maintenance, operations and administrative staff across the department on the best practices for management of natural resources. These educational programs improve efficiency and ensure compliance with regulations and policies to protect the environment.

To support the Department's MS4 NPDES permit that regulates stormwater discharges (described above), the Department of Parks conducts many Personnel Education and Outreach activities to promote water quality preservation across the park system. Initiatives to improve water quality and meet the requirements of the permit include:

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- Pollution Prevention Training – Mandatory annual training targeting frontline operations staff that covers pollution prevention and spill cleanup response
- Stormwater Management Facility Maintenance – Field training conducted for bioretention facility maintenance
- Pesticide Use Compliance and Tracking – Training on the new system for tracking pesticide use, alternative pest control practices, and compliance with the new County regulations on pesticides
- Certification for Pesticide and Fertilizer Use – Training to become State registered pesticide applicator and/or State certified fertilizer applicator
- Production of Minnow Minutes – A newsletter to provide education and outreach to all staff on topics such as biological monitoring of streams, air pollution sources and impacts, and nutrients as a major water pollutant
- Mosquito-Borne Illness Prevention – Training on Zika virus and other mosquito borne illnesses, personal protection from bites, as well as methods to eliminate mosquito breeding habitat

Additional educational initiatives include:

- MDE Responsible Personnel Certification (RPC) Program – Park engineers educate staff about the importance of erosion and sediment control, and encourage appropriate staff to achieve certification through MDE’s Responsible Personnel Certification Program
- Integrated Pest Management and Synthetic Chemical Use Reduction – Annual training in pesticide use, safety, and integrated pest management that provides strategies and techniques to identify and prevent the spread of pest species (including invasive species) while minimizing pesticide use, protecting the environment and preventing off-target effects

Status of 2012 PROS Plan Recommendations

The *2012 PROS Plan* made several recommendations for improvements to the County’s implementation program to conserve and protect natural resources in the Park system as well as set ambitious goals for land acquisition of natural resources. The Department of Parks has made progress towards accomplishing many of those recommendations in the *2012 PROS Plan*, as described in the Implementation Efforts section. These accomplishments are summarized here by the Local Goals as established in *Vision 2030*.

Goal 2

Promote awareness, appreciation, and understanding of Montgomery County’s natural and historical resources.

Objective

- Develop and implement interpretive master plans to guide educational and interpretive programs.

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Implementation: Develop a strategic and cutting edge interpretive plan. Prioritize park sites for implementation of interpretive messages.

Progress: While a comprehensive interpretive master plan has not been completed to date, significant amounts of interpretive signage has been coordinated and implemented across the County at priority cultural and natural resource sites. Examples of sites interpreted to the public include the Rachel Carson Greenway trail along the Northwest Branch (8 interpretive panels) and 9 interpretive panels focused on environmental stewardship located in four Regional Parks, a Conservation Park and a down-county Stream Valley Park. []

- Develop a multi-age environmental literacy program to raise fundamental understanding of the natural systems of Montgomery County, the relationships and interactions in the living and non-living environment, and how to deal sensibly with complex issues that involve weighing scientific evidence, uncertainty, and economic, aesthetic, and ethical considerations.

Implementation: Expand ongoing training in environmental stewardship for all Parks staff and create public programming that supports Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Maryland State environmental literacy standards.

Progress: Parks is implementing a robust program of education programs for adults and children and internal staff training on the importance of environmental resources. See descriptions above, Educate Citizens and Staff About Natural Resources.

Goal 9

Maintain quality park and recreation lands and facilities for efficiency, safety, attractiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Objectives

- Continue to refine current maintenance levels of service and standards based on industry best practices (e.g., maintenance, health, and safety standards) and update standards (e.g., mowing frequency for different park types, natural resources management, routines to maintain clean parks and recreation facilities, etc.)

Implementation: Revise and develop as necessary standards for park maintenance, custodial work, tree maintenance and natural resources management. Communicate with policy-makers and the public if changes to maintenance routines are required due to resource limitations.

Progress: Maintenance standards are constantly revised and updated to meet goals for efficiency and resource protection.

- Continue to identify operating budget impact (OBI) needed for new capital improvement projects and acquisitions and allocate adequate resources (e.g., program staff, maintenance, supplies and materials, other services and charges, etc.)

Implementation: Improve collection and consistency of OBI data for new parks and park facilities approved in the CIP. Identify new operating funds or change maintenance frequency / practices to reflect reallocation of existing operational resources (endowments, volunteers, sponsorships).

Progress: Implementation of the new Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system, currently in its first years of use in the Parks system, will result in improved data collection and usefulness of

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OBI information for new parks, including natural resource based recreation and natural areas conservation and management programs.

- Expand SmartParks applications to park planning, natural resources management, and historic resources management, etc.

Implementation: Enhance SmartParks capabilities and efficiency. Incorporate Maintenance and Operations Manual into SmartParks.

Progress: The new EAM system will include use by park planning, natural resources stewardship, and the cultural resources stewardship units in the near future to meet this objective.

Goal 11

Inventory, conserve, restore, and enhance ecologically healthy and biologically diverse natural areas with a focus on Park Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas, and Environmentally Sensitive Areas as defined in the "*Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*" (M-NCPPC, 2005).

Objectives

- Develop a protocol and schedule for routine inventory and analysis of natural resources like the "Montgomery County Stream Protection Strategy."

Implementation: Standardize and schedule the inventory of parkland natural resources. Use staff and volunteers to inventory park natural areas. Update and maintain a GIS inventory database.

Progress: Inventory and analysis of natural resources on parkland has been prioritized for the most important natural resources (Priority Natural Resource Areas) as identified earlier in this chapter. A target of evaluating 1,000 acres per year is proposed for the next five years.

- Develop a countywide natural resources management plan.

Implementation: Finalize draft Natural Resources Management Plan to include Vegetation Management Plan and Appendices; Plans and Guidelines for the management of white-tailed deer, beaver, and Canada geese; and Countywide Stream Protection Strategy.

Progress: Complete. The NRMP was completed and presented to the Planning Board in February 2013.

- Prioritize Best Natural Areas and Biodiversity Areas based on their ecological value and biological diversity.

Implementation: Develop criteria and select sites. Use the Cultural Resources Asset Priority Index as a model for prioritization.

Progress: A comprehensive prioritization within the designated BNAs and BDAs has not been undertaken to date.

- Develop and implement natural resources management plans for all Best Natural Areas and Biodiversity Areas by 2018 and update each of them every six years.

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- **Implementation:** Create product and plan schedule with management plans.

Progress: The objective remains for all parks with significant natural resources (BNAs and BDAs) and for principal down-county stream valley parks to have a completed O&U Plan for all Natural Areas. A new timeline has not been set for completing this process, but instead a target of evaluating 1,000 acres per year.

- Develop comprehensive restoration plans for down-county stream valley parks including Rock Creek, Sligo Creek, Little Falls Branch, Cabin John Creek, and Northwest Branch.

Implementation: Use current Rock Creek study as pilot program. Conduct studies of select stream valley parks. Select focus areas. Establish CIP projects and maintenance plans for sites selected.

Progress: Not yet started.

- Expand the current white-tailed deer management program into down-County areas if consistent with public demand, natural resource management needs, and public safety.

Implementation: Determine where additional management is required. Assess whether current staffing levels are adequate to conduct additional management. Publicize, create, and fund program if warranted.

Progress: Expansion of deer population management into down-county areas has occurred in 5 park units since 2012. In total, 8 park units have seen implementation of deer population management on parkland during the period of last publication of the PROS plan, including the development and implementation of an Archery Managed Deer Hunting Program that will allow for further expansion into developed areas of the county in a more resource efficient manner. Expansion into parkland of highly developed areas of the county continues to be complex, and is being pursued in a very controlled and conservative approach to ensure safety, sustainability, and public trust.

- Develop natural resources-based stewardship training for park staff.

Implementation: Use available training programs, including webinars, and develop and present training on an approved schedule.

Progress: Significant new training on environmental stewardship has been implemented across the Parks department over the past five years. See section on Staff Training and Education above.

- Develop new volunteer-based programs to assist with the inventory and management of natural resources in County parks (e.g., Forest Stewards).

Implementation: Review and update existing programs (e.g., Weed Warriors). For the new Forest Stewards Volunteer Program -- Prepare a volunteer job description, recruitment strategy, training and certification program, work schedule, strategy for coordinating with operations staff, reporting structure for work performed, and performance measures.

Progress: The Weed Warrior Program continues to evolve and expand its efforts to encourage volunteer support of our forest ecosystems by containing NNI plants. The Woods Warrior

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Program, which utilizes existing Weed Warrior trained volunteers, has been developed to evaluate and maintain areas of reforestation and to fence vegetation requiring special protection from the effects of herbivory and invasion.

- Determine staffing levels required to accomplish all objectives.

Implementation: Track staffing levels and adjust as needed to accomplish all objectives of Goal 11.

Progress: The new EAM system will allow for this detailed tracking and adjustment once it reaches full implementation in future years.

- Expand control of non-native invasive plants (NNIs) particularly in Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas, and other Environmentally Sensitive Areas of parkland.

Implementation: Expand identification, mapping, prioritization, and monitoring according to all natural resource priorities, using volunteers where possible. Increase replanting of NNI treatment areas. Develop and apply quantitative measures of success.

Progress: NNI management and control programs have expanded significantly over the past five years. Efforts to identify, map, prioritize and monitor NNI's has expanded - however, management of NNI's has remained relatively constant in these specified areas of attention, and to date no metrics to evaluate effectiveness of management efforts has been developed. In 2015, staff completed an amendment of the Best Management Practices for Non-Native Invasive Plants. The Weed Warrior Program continues to grow, with the number of trained volunteers having doubled since 2012 (approx. 600 to approx. 1200) and has expanded into new parklands. As well, some herbaceous and woody plantings have occurred as part of these efforts to enhance restoration effects of NNI management.

- Review and revise "Nuisance Wildlife Guidelines for Beaver and Canada Geese".

Implementation: Annually assess status of nuisance wildlife including beaver and Canada geese and expand proactive management efforts where problems exist. Standardize protocols for assessing on an annual basis, the nuisance status of wildlife populations; train park staff on strategies for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts of nuisance wildlife and permitted techniques for population control; apply reporting structure and related performance measures.

Progress: No revision has occurred. These guidelines continue to guide best management practices for management of impacts and populations of these species. Reporting is conducted as a requirement of Federal and State permitting and in support of the NPDES MS4 Phase I permit requirements.

Recommendations

Over the next five years, several issues stand out as especially important to address to continue Montgomery Parks' strong history of stewarding natural resources in the park system and across the County.

First, based on input from citizen surveys, the Planning Board, and multiple studies, maintaining what we have in good condition is the most important stewardship step not only for constructed facilities within parks, but also for natural resources. In fact, preventing natural resources from degrading due to a variety of influences is perhaps even more critical for irreplaceable natural resources than for other facilities that can be rebuilt or replaced as long as adequate funding is available. Once a unique natural ecosystem has been negatively impacted by excess stormwater runoff, overtaken by non-native invasive plants, or other human impacts to the landscape, it may be difficult if not impossible to replace that natural resource. As such, maintaining the highest quality natural resources in our parks remains the highest priority for the many implementation programs described in this chapter.

Second, to assist in targeting stewardship efforts to the best resources, staff will refine the management objectives for natural resources to create a clearly spelled out rationale for allocating scarce resources to conservation efforts. As discussed in this chapter, the designated Priority Natural Resources Areas are a primary factor in determining where scarce staff, contract and volunteer resources should be allocated. Additional factors that could be considered and placed into a more refined set of criteria for allocating resources could include:

- Consider the most efficient ways to actively manage resources for human impacts
- Determine areas that should have "hands on" vs. "hands off" approach to resource management
- Consider operating budget impacts (OBI) for various allocations of management efforts, and continue to document needs for additional OBI for current and new parkland

Finally, the Mission, Vision and Values of Montgomery Parks emphasizes providing a balanced system of recreation and stewardship to the citizens of Montgomery County. That overall mission is typically interpreted to mean a balance between facility-based recreation and natural resources conservation. However, given the high level of importance that our citizens and policy leaders place on trails and natural areas for recreation, we also need to balance stewardship and recreation within the subset of parkland that is made up of natural resources. The objective is to provide the public access that is necessary to meet the contemplative and active resource-based recreation desires of our residents while minimizing impacts to all natural resources. To achieve that balance, Parks will continue to prioritize our most precious natural resources for conservation efforts and appropriate public access, and identify our less valuable or less unique natural areas for higher levels of public access and recreation. As described throughout this chapter, Montgomery Parks has and will continue to do that balancing act by relying upon scientific data and analysis and results-oriented resource management efforts.

CHAPTER 6 - Cultural Resources Stewardship

Introduction

Protection and interpretation of our irreplaceable cultural resources are key to the mission, vision and values of the Montgomery Parks Department. Cultural resources include everything from prehistoric rock shelters to mid-century modern houses. Cultural, historical, and archaeological resources are vital to our shared Montgomery County heritage and offer unparalleled opportunities for resource-based educational programming. The challenges are how to protect endangered historic and archaeological sites with scant resources and how to balance preservation with competing land use priorities.

Buildings now considered historically significant were constructed in the park system as early as the 1930s, just a few short years after the Commission's origins in 1927. From Kensington Cabin and Meadowbrook Recreation Center to Meadowbrook Stables, many buildings from the 1930s are now historically designated on the County's *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* and are being preserved and used daily by the public. In addition, the vast acreage of the park system guarantees that many structures much older in years also are part of the park system. (Some historic dwellings date to the second half of the 18th century.) Many of the Commission's land ownings exist along the Potomac River or are based around stream valleys. They tell of a state that allowed slavery, saw Civil War activity, rose to agricultural prominence, and feature a wealth of prehistoric and historic archaeological sites. All these cultural resources are protected and managed in keeping with federal, state and local historic preservation laws and cultural and archaeological resource best practices.

The Cultural Resources Stewardship program protects over 117 standing historic structures spread across 43 historic sites. Of 735 Montgomery County archaeological sites registered in the State of Maryland, 215 fall within M-NCPPC's park system. These cultural resources include a wide variety of site types spanning over thousands of years, dating from the earliest prehistoric lithic scatter site to the 20th century built environment:

Standing Structures*

- Schoolhouses
- Country stores
- Plantation houses
- Farm houses
- Manor houses
- Barns
- Other agricultural outbuildings
- Mills and mill houses
- Cabins
- Recreation Centers
- Mid-Century modern houses

Archaeological Sites

- Military installations and encampments
- Mills, mill houses and raceways
- Bridges
- Taverns
- Cabins and their sites
- Tenant houses
- Town sites
- Farmsteads and plantations
- Rock shelters
- Quarries
- Lithic scatters
- Cemeteries

**Note: Standing structures are often accompanied by archaeological sites.*

Stewarding cultural resources always requires at its foundation historic research, analysis, and interpretation. Projects rely on primary source documents; archaeological field work, lab work, cataloguing; analysis and reporting; application of historic significance standards (Determinations of National Register of Historic Places Eligibility, Determinations of Integrity, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, etc.); and compliance with all applicable laws (including, but not limited to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966). The Department of Parks' inventory of cultural resources is maintained not only in Geographic Information System (GIS) layers, but also in a Cultural Resources Asset Inventory database and in a custom-designed archaeological database.

A 2006 Departmental Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources in Parks, titled "*From Artifact to Attraction*" also guided the Department in past years in prioritizing the approach to historic rehabilitation and maintenance. All Master Plans and Sector Plans feature recommendations based on the preservation and stewardship of cultural resources on parkland, and, where appropriate, individual park master plans are written to guide cultural resource site development (e.g., the Josiah Henson Park Master Plan of 2010). Stewardship of resources follows federal, state and local policies and best practices.

Policy and Guidelines

Below is a listing of applicable laws and policies pertaining to cultural resource stewardship:

FEDERAL LAWS AND POLICIES

Law or Regulation: *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), Section 106, as amended, along with its regulations 36 CFR Part 800.*

Purpose

The primary federal law regarding review of federal projects (or projects that use Federal moneys or permitting) for effects on historic preservation and is commonly referred to as "Section 106." The Maryland Historical Trust, the State Historic Preservation Office, reviews projects in Maryland.

Law or Regulation: *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (1995).*

Purpose

Preservation guidance to historic building owners and building managers, preservation consultants, architects, contractors, and project reviewers prior to treatment.

Law or Regulation: *Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (1983) Amended and Annotated, 2000]*

Purpose

Guidelines to integrate the diverse efforts of many entities performing historic preservation into a systematic effort to preserve our nation's culture heritage.

Law or Regulation: *National Environmental Policy Act of 1970*

Purpose

Similar to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 in that it requires review of federal projects (or projects that use Federal monies or permitting) for its impacts on the environment.

STATE LAWS AND POLICIES

Law or Regulation: *Annotated Code of Maryland: The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Act of 1985 as amended, State Finance and Procurement Article §§ 5A- 325 and 5A-326*

Purpose

Analogous to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, but on the state level. To ensure consistency for projects with both federal and state involvement, the Maryland Historical Trust follows the process set forth in 36 CFR Part 800 for reviewing state assisted actions and reviews projects in Maryland.

Law or Regulation: *Preserve Maryland (MHT, 2014)*

Purpose

Preserve Maryland is a five-year policy document (2014-2018) that charts a way for the historic preservation community to work more effectively to protect the state's historic and cultural heritage. It contains five goals: 1) connect with broader audiences, 2) improve the framework for preservation, 3) expand and update documentation 4) build capacity and strengthen networks and 5) collaborate toward shared objectives.

Law or Regulation: *Maryland Historical Trust's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Maryland (Schaeffer and Cole 1994)*

Purpose

Maryland's minimum standards for all phases of archaeological work within the state of Maryland.

Law or Regulation: *Collections and Conservation Standards for Maryland (Maryland Historical Trust 2005)*

Purpose

These guidelines ensure the long-term preservation of the state's irreplaceable archaeological heritage.

LOCAL LAWS AND POLICIES

Law or Regulation: *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24 A. Historic Resources Preservation*

Purpose

Montgomery County's Historic Preservation Ordinance that protects properties designated on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* and sets out the County's implementation of preservation policies.

Law or Regulation: *Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites (M-NCPPC, 1976)*

Purpose

M-NCPPC document including a geographic map that identifies resources that are potentially historic. These sites are afforded limited protection under Chapter 24-A of the Montgomery County Code, the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Ordinance.

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Law or Regulation: *Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation (M-NCPPC, 1979)*

Purpose

The Master Plan for Historic Preservation is the County's preservation inventory. It lists all officially designated historic sites and districts that have been found to hold historic or architectural significance and merit protection under Chapter 24-A, the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Law or Regulation: *Montgomery County Heritage Plan (MHAA, 2002)*

Purpose

The plan on how to use state heritage funding. The plan's goals and strategies cover interpretation and education, marketing and economic development, and preservation and stewardship (i.e., heritage tourism).

Law or Regulation: *From Artifact to Attraction: A Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources (M-NCPPC, 2006)*

Purpose

A Departmental strategic plan to create a blueprint for the future use and priority of Montgomery County Parks' cultural resources.

Law or Regulation: *Cultural Resources Asset Priority Inventory (M-NCPPC, 2009)*

Purpose

A metric chart that uses criteria to prioritize Parks' historic built inventory in need of capital. It is a living, changing repository, wherein new acquisitions of a cultural or historical nature can be added to the inventory. (The Asset Inventory is based on Department of the Interior, National Park Service facilities management model adapted for Parks' use).

Law or Regulation: *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan (M-NCPPC and Montgomery County Department of Recreation, 2011)*

Purpose

A Strategic Plan to guide the M-NCPPC Department of Parks, Montgomery County and the Montgomery County Department of Recreation in the provision of stewardship of natural and historic resources and opportunities for active life-long learning, leisure, and recreation. *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* states several goals that apply to cultural resources: 1) Protect natural, historical, and archaeological resources; 2) Nurture an appreciation for our natural and cultural legacy; 3) Collaborate with partners to provide sustainable, accessible, and diverse leisure opportunities; and 4) Engage a diverse community and proactively respond to changing demographics, needs, and trends.

Law or Regulation: *M-NCPPC Planning Board-adopted Master and Sector Plans and Functional Plans*

Purpose

Master Plans and Sector Plans are based on geographical location while Functional Plans undertake projects that span more than one geographic area. Each community within Montgomery County has a master plan that creates a comprehensive view of land use trends, including history and preservation. Functional Plans can include environmental resources, historic preservation, transportation networks, and zoning text amendments.

Law or Regulation: *Montgomery County Code Chapter 22A, Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD)*

Purpose

A regulation that requires the collection and presentation of environmental information for a property that is planned for development. Among the requirements are the identification and complete inventory of archaeologically sensitive features and historic sites.

Implementation

The Cultural Resources Stewardship Section's mission is to research the history of cultural sites; to plan for the preservation and operation of cultural sites in the context of geographic and functional plans; to stabilize, rehabilitate, and restore historic structures on parkland; to unearth, process and analyze archaeological artifacts; and to program and interpret the 8-10 best historic sites that tell Montgomery County's story. The Section's work program is thus defined by four broad areas: History and Planning; Preservation and Building Rehabilitation; Archaeology; and Public Interpretation.

Historic research is based on primary source documents wherever possible. Historic preservation and rehabilitation projects are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Archaeology is based on the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the State of Maryland's archaeological best practices. Public interpretation is based on National Park Service, Association of American Museums, Association of African American Museums, and the Association for State and Local History Farm Museum best practices.

The Cultural Resources program brings together a corps of professionals with expertise in history, archaeology, interpretation, museum management, farming, architectural history, and historic preservation. The programs delivered to the public cover many aspects of American history — enslavement, Civil War, commerce, industry, education, agriculture, religion, Native American, and social history. Current implementation programs include:

HISTORY AND PLANNING

State and federal archives are routinely combed through for all information pertaining to cultural properties on parkland. Examples of the types of documents used include land grants, deeds, census roles, records of enslavement, historic photographs and correspondence, historic aerial photographs, inventories, estate cases, insurance policies, historic maps and atlases, etc. In addition, the Program staff participate in all Master Plans, Sector Plans, Park Plans, and acquisition planning involving cultural resources

PRESERVATION AND BUILDING REHABILITATION

The preservation and building rehabilitation program is based on an Inventory and assessment that is continuously updated on the portfolio of historic properties. The Asset Inventory is a prioritization tool that takes into consideration how rare a building is in the county and within Parks' portfolio, whether or not it is locally designated, whether or not the state holds a preservation easement on the property, what are its best potential uses for adaptive reuse; and how strong is its constituency. The resulting ranking helps allocate scarce dollars to too many projects. In addition, the program designates properties on state and local inventories for protection if they meet the standards and such protection is

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warranted. Each year, the Capital Improvement Program funds a few projects for rehabilitation in a fund called the Restoration of Historic Structures. More money should be allocated in the Restoration of Historic Structures CIP to those projects that rank high in the Cultural Resources Asset Inventory. In addition, funds are sought from the Maryland General Assembly and in private fundraising campaigns for select projects. The program coordinates with local, state and federal governments in regulatory matters for historic and archaeological resources, including obtaining Historic Preservation Commission approval, Section 106 compliance, and Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee approvals. The Program also uses scientific tools to better understand historic structures, including nail dating, historic paint analysis, and dendrochronology.

ARCHAEOLOGY

The Department of Parks maintains Geographic Information System (GIS) layers not only on park-owned cultural resources, but on state-identified known archaeological sites. The Archaeology Program implements an extensive field work program, an active lab program, curation, collection analysis, database analytics, reporting, displays and public interpretations and educational programming. The program uses scientific tools to understand archaeological resources, including faunal analysis, archaeological flotation analysis (to recover seeds, charcoal, and micro-artifacts), micro-analysis and x-ray radiography. The Archaeology Program also includes over 100 volunteers who contribute greatly to the work done by the small staff. Projects range from prehistoric rock shelters to mill sites to plantation dwellings to Civil War fortifications to early 20th century stores. Archaeological summer and spring break camps and educational programs are among the most popular programs in the Department. In addition, this Program participates in all planning projects that affect archaeological resources, including development projects and road construction projects. Using the State laws and guidelines, the National Preservation Act and Section 106 compliance, treatments for archaeological sites that are adversely affected include preservation, mitigation, stabilization, and the curation, conservation of artifacts and public commemoration.

PUBLIC INTERPRETATION

The public interpretation program tells the County's history using its 'best' stories. Its premier interpretive sites are Woodlawn Museum and the Underground Railroad Experience Trail, the Agricultural History Farm Park, Oakley Cabin African American Park, Josiah Henson Park, Blockhouse Point Park, and Kingsley Schoolhouse. Through regular public openings, reserved group tours, special events, student field trips, and partnership programs, these sites are open to the public for both free and moderately priced programs. Many of the programs are designed specifically to correlate to school core curricula.

In order to provide great public programs, the Public Interpretation Program, known as "History in the Parks," offers regular docent training, employs costumed interpreters, and provides a geographic spread of programs and events. The program's main season is April through October, but special programs are planned during Black History Month and multiple offerings make group tour reservations possibly year-round at most sites.

American history is told through universal themes: Enslavement, the Civil War, Quaker History/Underground Railroad, Emancipation and post-Civil War Free Black Populations, Agricultural history, Industrial History, Community-specific history, and Native American history.

Status of 2012 PROS Recommendations

Progress since the *2012 PROS Plan* has been extensive. Below are major highlights, followed by a listing of progress by each historic property.

The Cultural Resources Program opened a brand new heritage tourism destination at Woodlawn Museum, with traditional and multimedia exhibits focused on the Quakers, Underground Railroad, Enslaved and Free Black Communities in Maryland. The museum was opened officially in the stone barn and carriage house at Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park in June 2016.

Field trips programs were created for the site. In addition, working with architects, engineers and exhibit designers, the Cultural Resources Program is creating a new museum at Josiah Henson Park celebrating the life of the Reverend Josiah Henson and covering the subject of slavery in Maryland. The Program also established a living history program at the Agricultural History Farm Park, and will showcase its “Sow the Seeds of Victory” program this April 2017 there in commemoration of the anniversary of the U.S. entry into World War I. The History in the Parks Program also fixed up and opened a one -room schoolhouse, the Kingsley Schoolhouse, furnishing it with historic objects from the 1920s and runs regular programs there.

The Program designated eight additional resources for protection on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation and/or the National Register of Historic Places and rehabilitated and/or stabilized several distressed structures including: Bussard Farmhouse kitchen, Brainard Warner House, Kensington Cabin, Jesup Blair House, Meadowbrook Recreation Center, Brewer Farm at Woodstock, Darby Store, and Poole’s Store. . Thirty-four historic interpretive signs were added into the park system on historic and natural history.

Archaeologically, the Program was selected to participate in signature PBS archaeological television series. The Josiah Henson Archaeological site was featured in the second season of PBS Time Team America (TTA) as one of four episodes. By bringing high -tech equipment to help Park archaeologists, Time Team introduced the Reverend Josiah Henson to audiences across the U.S. through its documentary “The Search for Josiah Henson.” Excavation work continues at the Josiah Henson Archaeological Site, and a Meyers Foundation Grant allowed the Program to produce the Josiah Henson Park Archaeology Program Student Activity Booklet “Searching for Josiah Henson”, which targets 4th and 8th grade at Title I area schools.

Regular program implementation also features updated web sites, social media posts live from historic sites, ongoing lectures on projects in parks, traveling displays, “History in the Box” kits to schoolhouses, teacher training materials, etc.

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ASSET INVENTORY PRIORITY INDEX

Below is the Cultural Resources Stewardship Program's progress since PROS 2012 for Project Rehabilitation, Public History Programs and Archaeological Investigations organized by asset/location.

HENSON (JOSIAH) HOUSE, 11420 OLD GEORGETOWN RD.

Regional Park: Josiah Henson Special Park

Project Rehabilitation

- In Final Exhibits Design and Construction Drawings Phase.
- Secured NPS Save America's Treasures Grant, among other sources.

Public Interpretation and History

- Open for School and Group Tours, as well as public events.
- Archaeology exhibits completed.
- Obtained Meyers Foundation Grant for development of curriculum for Title I Schools.
- Developed the Josiah Henson Park Archaeology Program Student Activity Booklet "Searching for Josiah Henson".
- Hosts Events and Programs: Black History Month, Heritage Montgomery Days, Emancipation Days.
- Seasonal Staff Hired.

Archaeological Investigations

- Archaeological Excavations Regularly Conducted under plan by staff Principal Investigator.
- On-going processing and analysis of archaeological artifacts recovered from site

WOODLAWN MUSEUM, 16501 NORWOOD RD.

Regional Park: Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park

Project Rehabilitation

- New museum and heritage destination created out of stone barn and carriage house.
- Full site used for educational purposes including Underground Railroad Experience Trail.

Public Interpretation and History

- Open to the Public.
- Open for School and Group tours and programs.
- Interpretive Signage in place.
- Staff hired.

Archaeological Investigations

- Archaeological Investigations Completed.
- Archaeological processing and curation anticipated in next 5 years.

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WARNER (BRAINARD) PROPERTY, 10231 CARROLL PLACE

Regional Park: Brainard Warner Special Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Phase I Rehabilitation Complete, including removal or nursing home wings.
- Interim Exterior Stabilization Underway.
- No Available Funding for interior rehabilitation.

Public Interpretation and History

- Special Programming hosted on lawn, including Pumpkin Rock 'n Roll
- Interpretive Signage in research phase.

Archaeological Investigations

- Phase I Archaeology Report Completed.

BUSSARD FARM AT AGRICULTURAL HISTORY FARM PARK, 18400 MUNCASTER RD.

Regional Park: Agricultural History Farm Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Living History Farm Museum incorporating grounds, buildings, animals, etc.
- Kitchen Rehabilitation Completed.

Public Interpretation and History

- Regularly Open for Interpretation
- Partnership with Friends of the Agricultural History Farm Park
- Host Events and Programs: Harvest Festival, Music on the Farm, Wee Little Farmers, Sewing Groups, Storytime, etc.
- Interpretive Signage in place.
- Staff Hired.

Archaeological Investigations

- Archaeology Investigations Completed.
- On-going processing and analysis.

KINGSLEY SCHOOL, CLARKSBURG ROAD

Regional Park: Little Bennett Regional Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation Complete.

Public Interpretation and History

- Regularly Open for Interpretation.
- Interpretive Signage in place.

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years.

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OAKLEY CABIN 3610 BROOKEVILLE RD.

Regional Park: Reddy Branch Stream Valley

Project Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation completed pre-2012

Public Interpretation and History

- Regularly Open for Interpretation.
- Hosts series of special events and programs annually
- Interpretive Signage in place

Archaeological Investigations

- 2012 MHAA Grant for Archaeology Completed, including Report.
- On-going processing and analysis

WATERS HOUSE, 12535 MILESTONE MANOR LN.

Regional Park: Waters House Special Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation completed pre-2012

Public Interpretation and History

- Maintained as Parks Natural Resources Office Space

Archaeological Investigations

- Archaeology Investigations Completed

JESUP BLAIR, 900 JESUP BLAIR DR.

Regional Park: Jesup Blair Local Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Phase I Stabilization Complete,
- Phase II Full interior rehabilitation anticipated in next 3 yrs.

Public Interpretation and History

- Interpretive Signage in place (3 signs)

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

ZEIGLER LOG HOUSE, 25321 FREDERICK RD.

Regional Park: Little Bennett Regional Park

Project Rehabilitation

- No rehabilitation funding available at present.

Public Interpretation and History

- Interpretive Signage in place

Archaeological Investigations

- Archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

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- On-going processing and analysis

HYATTSTOWN MILL & MILLER'S HOUSE, 14920-21 HYATTSTOWN MILL RD.

Regional Park: Little Bennett Regional Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Major maintenance of miller's house in 2017

Public Interpretation and History

- Montgomery Parks partnership in mill with Hyattstown Mill Arts Project
- Interpretive Signage in place

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

KENSINGTON CABIN, KENSINGTON PKWY

Regional Park: Kensington Cabin Local Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Full Rehabilitation and occupancy by community classes anticipated in 2017
- Interpretive Signage Drafts complete

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY BLDG. (NORWOOD REC CENTER), 4711 NORWOOD DR.

Regional Park: Norwood Local Park

Project Rehabilitation:

- Exterior Stabilization and repairs to be completed in phases

Public Interpretation and History

- Leased for community purposes.

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

MEADOWBROOK STABLES, 8100 MEADOWBROOK LN.

Regional Park: Meadowbrook Local Park

Project Rehabilitation:

- Major Rehabilitation Completed

Public Interpretation and History

- Leased as equestrian center.
- No interpretive programming anticipated in next 5 years

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

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POPE FARMHOUSE AND COOKE'S RANGE, 7400 AIRPARK RD.

Regional Park: Pope Farm

Project Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation of 1920s house Complete
- Maintained for Office Space
- Plans for 18th century house in discussion

Public Interpretation and History

- No interpretive programming anticipated in next 5 years

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

POOLE/SENECA STORE AND HOUSE, 16401 OLD RIVER RD.

Regional Park: Seneca Landing Special Park

Project Rehabilitation

- House rehabilitated and leased
- Rehabilitation Design for store complete.
- Permitting and Construction of store anticipated in 2017 (to be completed in-house).

Public Interpretation and History

- Traveling Archaeological Exhibit to be completed 2017
- Interpretive Signage in place (4 signs)

Archaeological Investigations

- Archaeological Investigation Completed in Preservation Easement Boundary

SENECA STONE BARN (FISHER BARN), WASCHE RD.

Regional Park: Woodstock Equestrian Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Restoration Completed

Public Interpretation and History

- Interpretive Signage in place

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

MEADOWBROOK REC CENTER, 7901 MEADOWBROOK LN.

Regional Park: Meadowbrook Local Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Window Rehabilitation Completed

Public Interpretation and History

- Interpretive Signage anticipated in next 5 years

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Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

NORBECK SCHOOL/REC CENTER, 4101 MUNCASTER MILL RD.

Regional Park: Norbeck-Muncaster Mill Neighborhood Park

Project Rehabilitation

- No funding for rehabilitation at present

Public Interpretation and History

- Interpretive Signage anticipated in next 5 years

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

VALLEY MILL HOUSE, 1600 EAST RANDOLPH RD.

Regional Park: Valley Mill Special Park

Project Rehabilitation

- 2017 major maintenance and repairs undertaken.
- Ready for Lease to tenant by End of 2017

Public Interpretation and History

- Interpretive Signage on mill history in place (4 signs)

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

MORSE WATER FILTRATION PLANT, 10700-701 COLUMBIA PIKE

Regional Park: Burnt Mills East and West

Project Rehabilitation

- No funding for rehabilitation at present

Public Interpretation and History

- Used for storage and movie set
- Interpretive Signage in place

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

BOYD-MAUGHLIN HOUSE, 15215 BARNESVILLE RD.

Regional Park: Boyds Local Park

Project Rehabilitation

- Major Repairs and leasing to tenant anticipated in 2018

Public Interpretation and History

- Four interpretive signs anticipated in 2018

Archaeological Investigations

- No archaeological work completed or anticipated in next 5 years

Recommendations

The recommendations and priorities for cultural resources focus on public interpretation first and foremost, bringing the county's history and archaeological discoveries to life. In addition, they focus on prioritizing scarce resources for capital improvements on those properties that have the most visibility and significance in the inventory and on creating a searchable, analytical database of archaeological artifacts to better understand prehistoric to present-day culture. Recommendations are:

- Create an international destination at Josiah Henson Park, celebrating the life of the Reverend Josiah Henson and a museum to slavery in Montgomery County, Maryland. This project involves the construction of a new visitor center and the rehabilitation of the historic Riley Bolten House. Funding is the top priority for both traditional and interactive exhibits, as the museum will not be complete without exhibits for interpretation. Grounds to feature archaeological exhibits, former plantation interpretations, and areas for public educational programming. Publish works on the historical research and archaeology tied to Josiah Henson Park.
- Continue to provide support to the efforts of the Montgomery Parks Foundation in its critical capital campaign for Josiah Henson exhibits and recommend and implement use of other non-County funding sources.
- Expand visitorship and educational programming at the Woodlawn Museum at Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park. Adopt Business Plan premises to make this facility a signature cultural attraction. Evaluate the added potential of event rentals at the site, in addition to historic-based programs.
- Expand visitorship and educational programming at the Agricultural History Farm Park. Adopt interpretive plan and new programming to make this facility a signature cultural attraction.
- Continue to update the Cultural Resources Asset Inventory. Advocate for more funding in the Restoration of Historic Structures CIP to allow for better stabilization and preservation of endangered historic properties that rank on the Cultural Resources Asset Inventory.
- Complete the archaeological cataloguing database for analysis of archaeological inventory countywide. Use the internet-based features of this software to explore what archaeological sites looked like in the past.
- Continue to expand archaeological interpretation through permanent and traveling exhibits, as well as through interpretive signage.
- Work with the Department of Planning to initiate an archaeological ordinance like the one enacted by M-NCPPC, Prince George's Department of Planning.
- Adhere to all Maryland laws and archaeological best practices in projects affecting historic cemeteries and cultural sites.
- Complete the rehabilitation of the Jesup Blair House to make it a facility for Montgomery College's Science program and a home for the Silver Spring Historical Society's Archives.
- Find an appropriate partner and tenant for the Brainard Warner House in Kensington.
- Re-open the restored Kensington Cabin to the public.

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- Create a walking trail in Brookeville incorporating Oakley Cabin and the Newlin and Thomas Mills as a mitigation measure of the Brookeville Bypass.
- Continue to educate the public through the Department's historic interpretive signage program, developing educational signage at trailheads, along trails and at historic and cultural sites.
- Partner with local colleges and universities if opportunities arise to expand information and educational materials and opportunities for Montgomery Park's cultural resources.
- Continue to work with the Department's Program Access office to provide historical and archaeological programs and camps to an inclusive audience.
- Continue to work with the Department's ADA team to upgrade accessibility at historic sites, whenever possible and without compromising historic structures' character-defining features.
- Continue to develop educational, marketing and social media content to spark interest in educational programs and disseminate information to a broader and more diverse audience
- Develop specialized education programs to provide a Life Long Learning experience for Montgomery County citizens of all ages--from early education to seniors.
- Expand partnerships for educational programming with shared tours and large events such as Emancipation Day and Heritage Days. Partners include state, non-profit, and other local museums and park agencies such as Prince Georges Department of Parks and Recreation.

CHAPTER 7 - Agricultural Land Preservation

Introduction

PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO INVESTMENT IN LAND PRESERVATION

The foundation of Montgomery County's efforts to protect farmland and rural open spaces was the ... *on Wedges and Corridors: A General Plan for the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties (1964 General Plan)*. This plan envisioned a land-use pattern where intensive development was confined to a series of Corridor Cities located along major transportation arteries and separated by wedges of rural open space, low-density residential uses, and farmland. The *General Plan* intention was to protect large open spaces for farming, recreational opportunities, mineral extraction, and other natural resource activities, as well as to conserve and protect the public water supply.

In the 53 years since, Montgomery County has implemented its commitment to the protection of the Agricultural Wedge through a range of policies, plans, and regulations, working in concert with State easement programs and with private conservation initiatives.

In 1980, the Montgomery County Council approved, and the M-NCPPC adopted, the *Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space*, which recognized the critical and accelerating loss of farmland and open space in the County. To address this loss, the Plan created an 110,000-acre Agricultural Reserve and a 26,000-acre Rural Open Space area, covering in total almost a third of the County (p. iv).

Since then, Montgomery County has protected 70,416 acres of farmland through easement programs and has acquired environmentally sensitive and culturally significant properties in the Agricultural Reserve, placing them into parkland. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council and the American Farmland Trust, these efforts have resulted in the most successful farmland and open space preservation program in the country. The County's diverse agricultural industry has 540 farms and 350 horticultural enterprises, which contributed \$288 million to the local economy in 2016. In combination, these protected agricultural lands and park areas are key components of local and regional agricultural, economic, cultural, and environmental functions.

Montgomery County's vision and commitment to agricultural land preservation and stewardship of the Agricultural Reserve continues. Since the *2012 PROS Plan*, the County has further exceeded its goal of preserving 70,000 acres of farmland by 2010; has implemented a new program, the Building Lot Termination (BLT) program, to further protect farmland; and has preserved environmentally sensitive and culturally significant properties through programs such as Legacy Open Space; Montgomery County's Agricultural Land Preservation Program was recently recertified through the State of Maryland, so additional details on the programs described here can be found in the *Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Certification Report, FY1980 – FY2014*.

In addition to the immediate production of food and fiber, agricultural land serves many important functions: protection of sensitive natural areas, biological diversity and ecosystem function; reduction of

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polluted runoff into local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay; provision of landscapes of great beauty, and open spaces and locales for unstructured recreational activities; and preservation of the County's agricultural heritage and cultural resources. Montgomery County is committed to encouraging the growth of farming through land preservation efforts, public policies and programs—thus building toward a future with the capacity to provide for the needs of future generations.

ZONING AND REGULATION

Montgomery County has recognized population growth trends within its borders and taken action to conserve land for agriculture and open space, as detailed above. The *1969 General Plan Update* affirmed the *1964 General Plan* recommendations. In 1974, after extensive study by the Montgomery County Planning Board, the County Council approved a new Rural Zone to protect the wedge areas from increasing development pressure. This new zone imposed a five-acre minimum lot size on approximately one-third of the County. The Rural Zone was designed specifically to preserve farmland and further implement the recommendations of *the 1964 General Plan*.

In the following years, it became evident that the Rural Zone (in combination with the State Agricultural Assessment Program) was not sufficient to protect farmland. From 1975-1979, almost 11,000 acres of farmland were subdivided, primarily for dwellings. As a result, from 1976-1980, County Planning staff, the Montgomery County Planning Board, County Council, a Council-appointed Agricultural Task Force, and a cross-section of County residents wrestled with the problem of farmland and rural open space preservation.

To address the issue of the loss of farmland on the urban fringe, the *Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space (AROS)* was adopted by the M-NCPPC and approved by the County Council in 1980. The AROS Plan initiated the creation and application of the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) and the Rural Cluster (RC) zones, in conjunction with a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) system.

The RDT Zone gives strong preference to agriculture, forestry, and open space uses, as well as allowing a wide variety of agriculturally related commercial and industrial uses. It discourages residential uses by restricting residential development to one dwelling unit per 25 acres. Use of the RDT Zone significantly reduces fragmentation of farmland, stabilizes farmland value, minimizes development pressure, protects agricultural practices, and maintains a critical mass of farmland.

In return for this loss of development potential, the TDR system provides an economic return for farmland placed in the RDT Zone by allowing the owner of the farmland to sell development rights at a rate of one TDR per five acres. This is equivalent to the development density permitted under the 1974 Rural Zone before downzoning to the one dwelling unit per 25-acre density. The development rights may be used in specifically designated TDR receiving areas in parts of the County determined suitable for growth. When TDRs are sold for transfer to a receiving area, a perpetual easement is placed on the sending area restricting the use to agricultural or open space purposes.

Development rights are commodities that can be sold to developers and transferred to designated areas of the County where growth and development are desired. The private marketplace establishes the value of development rights, and the County is responsible for tracking the sale and transfer of rights

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through its records. The TDR system has the advantage of using the private sector to fund the protection of farmland.

In 1993, the County approved *A General Plan Refinement of the Goals and Objectives for Montgomery County*. The *1993 General Plan Refinement* updated the goals and objectives, outlined challenges, and provided a vision for the 21st century. The Refinement's vision for the agricultural wedge was addressed in three goal areas—Land Use, Economic Activity, and Community Identity and Design. The strategies relevant to agriculture are detailed below (see the *COUNTY GOALS* section of this chapter).

In 2001, the County approved *The Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan* which conserves Montgomery County's most significant open spaces, including unprotected natural, historic, agricultural, and urban open spaces. The Plan includes recommendations for protection of Farmland and Rural Open Space Target Areas, Natural Resources Sites, Water Supply Protection Target Areas, and Heritage Sites in the Agricultural Reserve through acquisition or easement.

The newest land preservation tool is the Building Lot Termination Program (BLT), adopted into the zoning code in 2008, that provides enhanced compensation to landowners for extinguishing potential lots in the RDT zone. The BLT easement program is implemented through two components, a publicly funded initiative and a privately funded initiative similar to the TDR program. The BLT program is a critical tool to reduce development potential in the Agricultural Reserve below the 1 unit per 25 acres in the RDT zone and under TDR easements, to provide more complete protection of functioning agricultural lands in the County.

Farmers and landowners are crucial partners in efforts to preserve agricultural land. They are both participants in, and beneficiaries of, efforts to preserve agricultural land. Landowners can choose from a number of State and local preservation programs. Each of the programs places an easement on property designed to minimize non-agricultural development of the land.

FUNCTIONAL, COMMUNITY AND PARK MASTER PLANS

The 1980 AROS Master Plan continues to be implemented through recommendations in a variety of planning documents. Detailed guidance to significant parts of the Agricultural Reserve is provided by several functional master plans that have been adopted since 1980. Most notable of these include the *1993 Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed*, the *1996 Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan* and the *2001 Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan*. Designation in the *1979 Master Plan for Historic Preservation* (as amended) provides recognition for one historic road and for numerous farms and crossroads communities in the Reserve that form the foundation of today's working landscape.

Community master plans that describe land use recommendations outside of the Agricultural Reserve also support agricultural land preservation goals. The Transfer of Development Rights and Building Lot Termination programs require support in the forms of TDR receiving areas and the application of zones that encourage use of BLTs outside of the Agricultural Reserve. Since the *2012 PROS Plan*, no new TDR receiving areas have been added, but all new master plans during this time have increased areas with certain zones that encourage the use of BLTs to increase development density. Of the twelve master plans approved since 2012, two also require the use of BLTs for a portion of the incentive density in the CR zone (Wheaton CBD Sector Plan, January 2012, and White Oak Science Gateway, July 2014).

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Planning and operational documents for individual parks, including Park Master Plans and Park Operation & Use Plans, provide a variety of recommendations that support agriculture, rural open space, natural resources stewardship, and agricultural education. Examples include the Park Master Plans for the MOOseum and Woodstock Equestrian Special Park, plans that span both agriculture and parkland.

PARKS DEPARTMENT SUPPORT OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESERVE

The Department of Parks plays several roles in the County's agricultural land preservation efforts, from acquiring and conserving lands with significant natural and cultural resources to supporting agricultural conservation both directly and indirectly. There are over 30 parks in the Agricultural Reserve, including three State and Federal parks that protect major waterways (Potomac River, Patuxent River, and Seneca Creek), two State Wildlife Management Areas, and a variety of M-NCPPC parks to meet the needs of the residents in the Agricultural Reserve and the rest of the County. The combination of undeveloped rural land and viewsheds, agricultural destination businesses, and these important public open spaces results in the Agricultural Reserve being a popular destination for residents of the County and the region. People visit these parks for hiking, biking, horseback riding, birding, fishing, and participating in historical, cultural and educational programs provided by Parks staff and volunteers

M-NCPPC manages twenty-seven parks within the Agricultural Reserve. Three large parks provide a combination of facilities and nature areas to provide for recreation opportunities within the Reserve: Little Bennett Regional Park includes a campground, day use area, historic interpretive sites, streams for fishing, and miles of trails through forested lands; Black Hill Regional Park includes picnic areas, playgrounds and volleyball courts, boating and fishing on Seneca Lake, and miles of trails that provide for a variety of recreational activities; and South Germantown Recreation Park provides a regionally-significant complex of recreation amenities and the 24-field SoccerPlex. These large regional and recreational parks provide a unique combination of amenities for active recreation along with large areas of natural resources and associated trails, and serve residents within the Reserve and across the County. In addition to these larger parks, six smaller local/neighborhood parks provide for the recreational needs of residents of the Reserve, including ballfields, playgrounds, and other local park amenities.

The Parks Department supports the conservation of rural open space and agricultural lands through eight Conservation Parks and five Stream Valley Parks located across the Agricultural Reserve. These conservation-oriented parks provide protection to several of the most ecologically significant natural areas in the County, and also includes many acres of farm fields. These farm fields are often placed into agricultural leases with local farmers to provide active management of the land, support the agricultural economy, and to preserve rural open space and viewsheds. Acquisition of new conservation-oriented parkland can also result in the preservation of agricultural land by removing remaining development rights from land, thus reducing development pressure that affects the overall viability of the Reserve. The combination of farm fields, forests and stream valleys in these parks plays an important role in maintaining biological diversity of plant and animal communities in the County, as well as providing unique opportunities for natural resource-based recreation and education in the Reserve.

Five Special Parks directly support the many purposes of the Agricultural Reserve. The 873-acre Woodstock Equestrian Park includes 16 miles of equestrian and hiking trails and associated amenities to meet the recreational needs of the equestrian community that is concentrated in the Agricultural

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Reserve. The 100-acre Rickman Farm Horse Park has a therapeutic riding program that serves to help clients through engagement with horses. The 455-acre Agricultural History Farm Park with an operating early 20th-century farm (located outside the Reserve) provides significant educational opportunities about the role of agriculture in the County's development and its continuing importance in our urbanizing society. The 103-acre Sugarland Special Park primarily serves as rural open land that is under active farming use in the Agricultural Lease program. Finally, the Darby Store Historic/Cultural Park includes a refurbished country store that currently houses an agriculture-related business. This Park provides protection for the rural historic character of the Agricultural Reserve, educational opportunities about the history of agriculture and commerce in the County, and a facility for a functioning business that can support the agricultural economy.

Goals

STATE GOALS

Maryland's small size and large population place unremitting development pressure on agricultural and natural resource land. Initially radiating from the metropolitan core of the Baltimore–Washington area, this pressure has now extended over almost the entire state to varying degrees, challenging the ability to achieve the following State goals for agriculture:

- Permanently preserve agricultural land capable of supporting a diversity of agricultural production.

- Protect natural, forestry, and historic resources and the rural character of the landscape associated with Maryland's farmland.

- To the greatest degree possible, concentrate preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource-based industries.

- Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource-based industries.

- Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating State agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs.

- Work with local governments to achieve the following:

- Establish preservation areas, goals and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals;

- In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public at large, and State and local government officials;

- Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs;

- Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas; and

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Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public-at-large.

COUNTY GOALS

Montgomery County Goals for agriculture are consistent with these State of Maryland goals. County goals are articulated in three sections of the *1993 General Plan Refinement*:

Land Use

Objective #4: Preserve farmland and rural open space in the Agricultural Wedge

- A. Strengthen land use policies that encourage farmland preservation and rural open space preservation in the Agricultural Wedge.
- B. Strengthen incentives and regulations to encourage agricultural use and discourage development within the Agricultural Wedge.
- C. Limit non-agricultural uses to those that are low intensity or otherwise identified in master plans.
- D. Continue the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program as well as the County and State farm easement programs as important elements of preserving farmland.
- E. Continue the function of existing rural centers as the focus of activity for the surrounding countryside.
- F. Ensure that rural centers primarily serve rural lifestyles and are compatible in size and scale with the intent of the Agricultural Wedge.
- G. Continue agriculture as the preferred use in the Agricultural Wedge.

Economic Activity

Objective #2: Retain and enhance existing businesses consistent with master plans.

- C. Foster the agricultural industry, particularly activities in the Agricultural Wedge.

Objective #5: Foster a stable and competitive business climate through appropriate land use decisions

- D. Coordinate land use decisions with the County's management of resources to facilitate economic vitality and quality of life.

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Community Identity and Design

Objective #3: Identify and preserve significant historic, scenic, and cultural features and promote art in public areas

Implementation

Montgomery County has access to a large “toolbox” of programs to preserve agricultural land, each described in this section. The County’s Office of Agriculture is the lead agency in implementing the State and County easement programs to support the agricultural economy in the County, while the M-NCPPC implements the Legacy Open Space program and other policies/programs to support preservation and stewardship. The chart below provides a summary of protected acreage for each of the primary easement programs.

Figure 17 - Total Acreage in Preservation per Program.

| Program | Begun | Through FY2004* | Acres Preserved | |
|--|-------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | FY2005 to FY2016* | Total through FY2016* |
| Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) | 1967 | 2,086 | 0 | 2,086 |
| Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) | 1977 | 3,322 | 1,424 | 4,746 |
| Maryland Rural Legacy Program (RLP) in Montgomery County | 1997 | 3,904 | 971 | 4,875 |
| Montgomery County Transferable Development Rights Program (TDR) | 1980 | 45,042 | 7,111 | 52,153 |
| Montgomery County Agricultural Easement Program (AEP) | 1987 | 6,678 | 1,897 | 8,575 |
| Montgomery County Building Lot Termination Program (BLT) – Public | 2008 | na | 1,359 | 1,359 |
| Montgomery County Building Lot Termination Program (BLT) – Private | 2008 | na | 273 | 273 |

* Fiscal year (FY) is July 1 through June 30

Information from Montgomery County Office of Agriculture.

STATE PROGRAMS

THE MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST (MET)

This program was established by the Maryland State Legislature in 1967 to encourage landowners to donate easements to protect scenic open areas, including farm and forest land, wildlife habitat, waterfront, unique or rare areas and historic sites. MET accepts both donated and purchased easements. In the donated easement program, the landowners are eligible for certain income, estate, gift and property tax benefits in return for limiting the right to develop and subdivide their land, now and in the future. Through this program, 2,086 acres were preserved through FY2016.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURE LAND PRESERVATION FOUNDATION (MALPF)

This program was established in 1977 by the State Legislature as a result of concern over decreasing farmland acreage caused by development. The program is implemented through the Maryland Department of Agriculture, in partnership with local government. The MALPF purchases agricultural land preservation easements directly from landowners for cash. Following the sale of the easement, agricultural uses of the property are encouraged to continue. Through FY2016, 4,746 acres were preserved under this program.

RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM (RLP) IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Passed by the Maryland General Assembly in May of 1997 as part of the Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act, the Rural Legacy Program encourages local governments and private land trusts to identify Rural Legacy areas and to competitively apply for funds to complement existing land conservation efforts or create new programs. This State program provides grants to Counties or other sponsors for preserving areas rich in agricultural, forestry, natural and cultural resources. The intent is to promote a resource-based economy, protect greenbelts and greenways and maintain the fabric of rural life. Grants can be directed to either purchase sensitive lands in fee or to acquire protection through conservation easements. In the spirit of maximizing both State and local funds, Montgomery County has been successful in its Rural Legacy applications by leveraging State/local funds to target significant agricultural resources through the conservation easement acquisition process. Since the first grants were awarded during the FY1998-1999 grant cycle, Montgomery County has been awarded a total of \$19.3 million in State Grant Funds; through FY2016, 4,875 acres have been protected by this program. As with the County's AEP program, TDRs created through the easement acquisition process are held jointly by the State/County and represent an asset and potential source of future revenue for the program. Through FY2014, the State/County has acquired 351 TDRs through this program.

COUNTY PROGRAMS

TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PROGRAM (TDR)

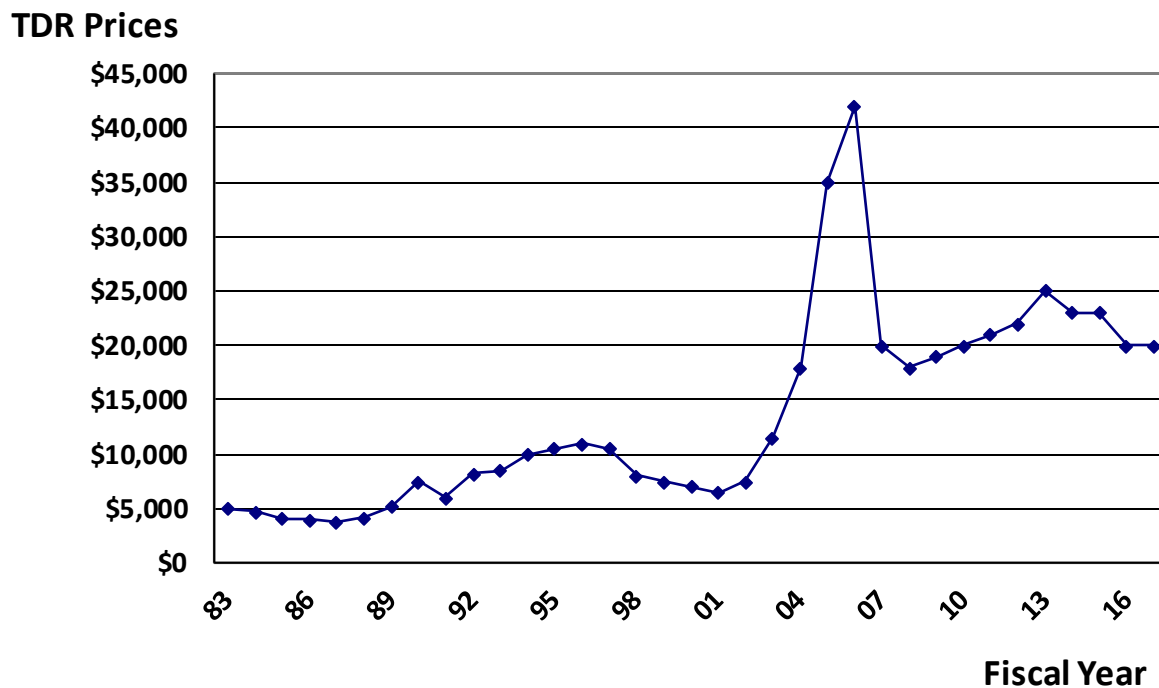
The Montgomery County TDR Program was established in 1980 as part of the *Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Functional Master Plan*. The TDR program allows landowners to transfer a development right from one parcel of land to another parcel. For agricultural land preservation, TDRs are used to shift development from agricultural areas ("TDR sending areas") to designated growth zones or ("TDR receiving areas") which are closer to public services and far removed from the "sending area". When rights are transferred from a parcel within the designated "TDR sending area," the land is

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restricted by a permanent TDR easement. The TDR program represents the private sector's investment in land preservation, as the price paid for TDRs is negotiated between a landowner and a developer. A developer who purchases TDRs is permitted to build at a higher density than permitted by the "base zoning." The funds paid for a TDR by the developer to a landowner creates a wealth transfer from the developed areas back into the rural economy.

Montgomery County has been recognized as having one of the most successful TDR programs in the nation, with 52,153 acres of agricultural land preserved by TDRs through FY2016. The following chart shows how the price of TDRs has varied over time with changes in the supply and demand.

Figure 18 – Average Price of Transferable Development Rights (TDRs), 1983 – 2016



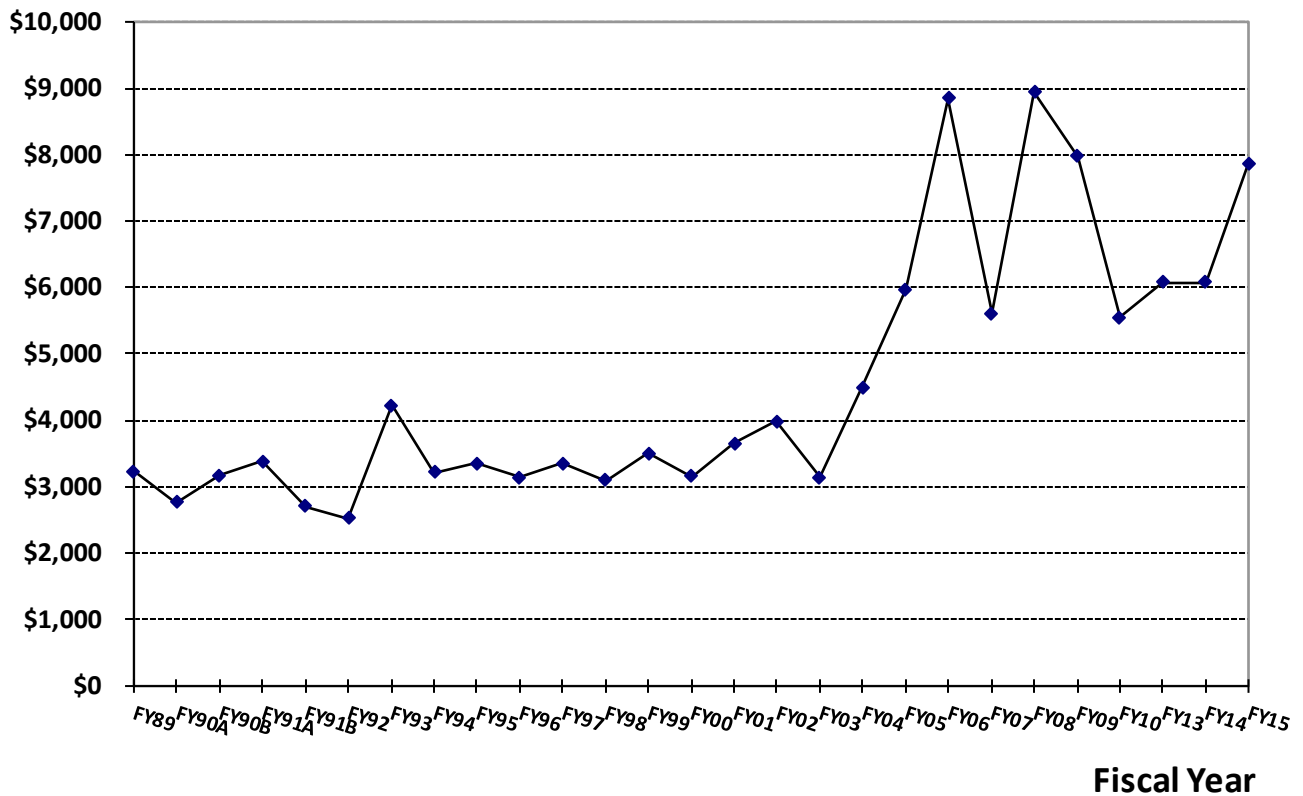
MONTGOMERY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT PROGRAM (AEP)

Established in 1987, this program gives the County the ability to purchase agricultural land preservation easements to preserve land for agricultural production. Lands eligible for participation in this program must be zoned Rural, Rural Cluster, or Rural Density Transfer, or subject to land being designated as an approved State or County Agricultural Preservation District. The program was created to increase both the level of voluntary participation in farmland preservation programs and to expand the eligibility of farmland parcels. Through FY2016, 8,575 acres were preserved under this program. The following graphic shows the AEP prices by fiscal year through FY2015.

Figure 19 - Agricultural Easement Program(AEP) Easement Prices through FY15

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Price Per Acre



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUILDING LOT TERMINATION (BLT) PROGRAM

The Montgomery County BLT program was established in 2008 with the first BLT easements purchased in 2011. The primary purpose of a BLT easement is to preserve agricultural land by reducing fragmentation of farmland due to residential development. A BLT easement restricts residential, commercial, industrial, and other non-agricultural uses beyond the level of protection that a TDR easement provides. A key feature of the BLT easement is an enhanced level of compensation to landowners who demonstrate that property has the capacity for residential development and who agree to permanently retire an approved on-site waste disposal system associated with the lot to be terminated.

This program has two phases. The initial program comprises a publicly funded program governed under County Law (Chapter 2B of the Montgomery County Code) and corresponding Executive Regulation 3-09AM. The seed money for the public Building Lot Termination (BLT) program was provided by the Parks Department acquisition funds (\$5 Million from the ALARF account). Over time, the publicly funded BLT program is intended to act like a revolving fund with developers paying for a portion of their BLT requirements and those funds being used to acquire additional BLTs. Since a development project may need to purchase a fraction of a BLT as a condition of their development plan, it will contribute

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funds to the public BLT program in proportion to the partial BLT required. To date, five partial BLT transactions have paid for 3.7 BLTs with contributions totaling \$824,079.

The second phase involves a privately funded initiative whereby the development community purchases whole BLT's directly from RDT zoned landowners. This privately funded initiative functions in a similar fashion as the County's highly successful Transfer of Development Rights Program (TDR). BLTs are one method that a developer may use for acquiring additional density for projects in the CR family of zones, and public benefit point structures in those zones incentivize the use of BLTs for that extra density. For example, if a developer seeks approval of a project that includes a plan to purchase 3.6 BLTs, typically they will purchase 3 whole BLTs from landowners and contribute funds equivalent to the value of 0.6 BLTs to the public program.

To date, the publicly funded BLT program has preserved over 1,180 acres of land and removed 30 potential development lots from the Agricultural Reserve, and the privately funded BLT program has preserved over 270 acres of land and removed 13 potential development lots. As more developments proceed in the coming decade in the more dense areas of the County that are zoned to encourage acquisition of BLTs, the BLT program is expected to accelerate in its ability to preserve farmland from future development and fragmentation.

M-NCPPC PROGRAMS

The M-NCPPC has worked for many decades to support the preservation and stewardship of agricultural and rural lands in Montgomery County. Since spearheading the creation of *the Agricultural and Rural Open Space Functional Master Plan* in 1980, the Planning and Parks Departments in Montgomery County have worked to preserve farmland through a variety of policies and programs and expended significant effort and funds to implement those programs. The Commission's programs complement the extensive efforts to protect the Agricultural Reserve that have been completed since 1980 through the easement programs as implemented by the County's Office of Agriculture.

Within the Commission, each Department has a role in preserving agricultural land. The Planning Department plays a critical role in maintaining large areas for agriculture and preservation of natural resources via their review of subdivision requests in the Agricultural Reserve. The Parks Department further works to preserve agricultural and rural lands by preserving targeted lands of significance within the Agricultural Reserve as parkland, providing public access for recreation, and agricultural and natural resource education on some of the most exceptional lands in the County, as described elsewhere in this Plan. Two key Parks programs are described here.

LEGACY OPEN SPACE PROGRAM (LOS)

The *Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (LOS FMP)* was approved by the Montgomery County Council in 2001. The LOS FMP includes one category of open space that is focused on preservation of Farmland and Rural Open Space. The functional plan recommended that the Legacy Open Space program and funding should support the agricultural preservation programs in several ways, primarily through supporting the AEP program and purchasing easements on exceptional programs directly. The LOS FMP also states a goal of reducing development potential on priority rural land to no more than 1 unit per 50 acres. During 15 years of implementation efforts, the LOS program has supported the goals of farmland preservation through the tools that are most appropriate for the Parks Department, primarily the use of in-fee land acquisition instead of easement acquisition.

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The Legacy Open Space program protects and stewards the Agricultural Reserve through two main avenues. First, when a high priority natural resource site is acquired as conservation parkland, further residential development is excluded from that property, thus reducing the number of potential rooftops in the Agricultural Reserve as a whole. This result is comparable to the preservation achieved by placing BLTs or other development restrictive easements on privately owned land. By reducing new development in the Reserve, the potential of the Reserve to remain a functioning economic agricultural area is supported. In addition to supporting farmland and rural open space through these acquisitions, other goals achieved include protection of sensitive natural resources, water supply areas, heritage resources, and the provision of trails and natural-resource recreation. To date, the Legacy Open Space program has resulted in the addition of approximately 1975 acres of rural and agricultural lands to the park system in the Reserve.

Second, above the preservation and stewardship of rural land purchased for parkland, those acquisitions can result in the complete protection of many additional acres of farmland that remain in active agriculture in private ownership. To achieve multiple goals for the Legacy Open Space program, agricultural preservation and Parks overall, partial acquisitions are often pursued that remove development rights from the land remaining in private ownership below the level of 1 unit per 25 acres. For instance, the portion of a farm that consists of high quality forest and natural resources that adjoins existing conservation parkland and that provides opportunities to make trail connections between public lands may be acquired in-fee as parkland. To meet farmland preservation goals, additional development rights can be purchased during that transaction that limit the development potential on the farmland remaining in private ownership. To date, LOS purchases of 1975 acres of parkland have resulted in over 300 acres of farmland and rural land remaining in private ownership but protected from further development that could damage future agricultural use.

AGRICULTURAL LEASE PROGRAM

Another Parks Department effort to support agricultural is our Agricultural Lease Program. Many acres within the Park system are actively farmed under lease agreements with local farmers, contributing to the provision of adequate land for farming and the overall agricultural economy. Currently, the Parks Department manages 16 agricultural leases totaling 1069 acres of active fields.

FUNDING SOURCES

AGRICULTURAL TRANSFER TAX

State Agricultural Transfer Taxes are collected when farmland is sold and converted to uses other than agriculture. The agricultural transfer tax assessed on real property is five percent of the consideration paid. Montgomery County's agricultural preservation program is certified by the State, and is therefore able to retain 75 percent of the agricultural transfer taxes collected to fund the agricultural preservation program. A total of \$30,983,365 from FY1990 through FY2014 was retained by the County for agricultural land preservation.

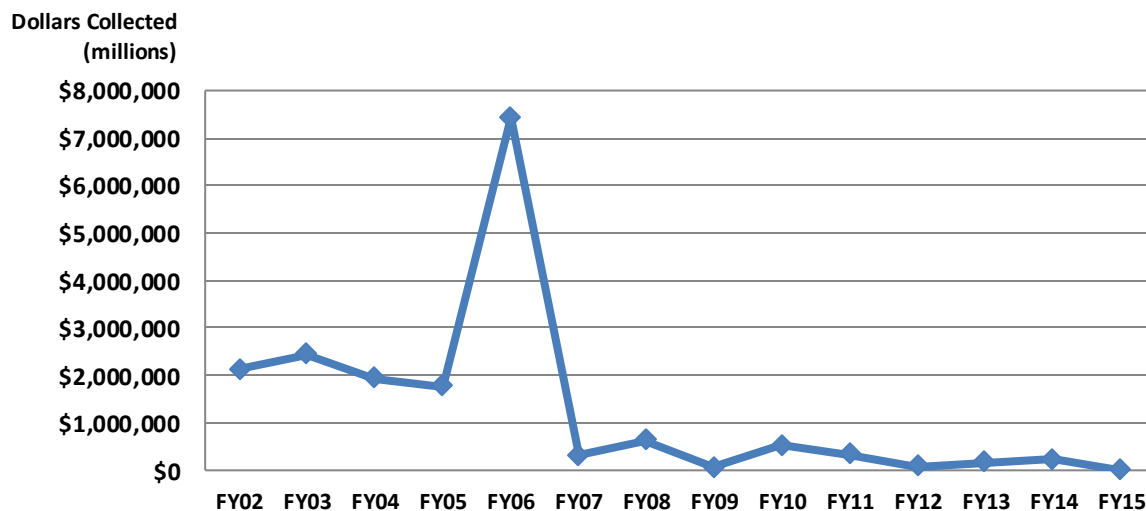
The County Office of Agriculture estimates that only about 4,000 acres of farmland exist in the County that could be developed and trigger the collection of agricultural transfer taxes (i.e., land outside of the Agricultural Reserve in agricultural use with a preferential agricultural tax rate). Montgomery County is running out of farmland to develop, thus creating a funding dilemma for the preservation program:

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Montgomery County will have fewer farm conversions that generate agricultural transfer taxes to fund future easement acquisitions.

As the primary funding source for farmland preservation easements in Montgomery County, the significant decline in Ag Transfer Tax revenue over the past decade has resulted in a severe shortage of funds for farmland preservation easement programs. The chart below illustrates the steady downward trend of these revenues, a trend that is expected to continue.

Figure 20 - Trend of Agricultural Transfer Tax Collections in Montgomery County, FY02-FY15



INVESTMENT INCOME

Agricultural Transfer Taxes retained by Montgomery County are placed in an interest-bearing account. Beginning in FY1994, the income generated by the interest was invested back into the agricultural land preservation program. As of FY2014, a total of \$4,578,529 of interest had accrued. Investment income was used to fund preservation initiatives, agricultural economic development initiatives and staffing costs.

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

One alternative for funding farmland preservation in Montgomery County is through the use of General Obligation (or G.O.) Bonds. G.O. bonds are backed by the full faith, credit and taxing power of the issuing jurisdiction. Because these types of bonds require debt servicing for repayment, the County has adopted a policy to limit their use for farmland preservation. This policy dictates that G.O. Bonds can only be used when the reserves of cash are significantly depleted. Declining collections of Agricultural Transfer Taxes in recent years necessitated an infusion of \$2 Million in G.O. Bonds in one year, but no additional G.O. Bonds are currently appropriated for farmland preservation.

STATE GRANTS

Beginning in 1997, the State's Rural Legacy Program was enacted as part of the Governor's Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation initiative to protect natural resources. Through this program, a grants program was established by which local governments and local land trusts could compete for

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State funds. These funds could be directed to either purchase sensitive lands in fee or acquire protection through conservation easements. Since the first grants were awarded during the FY1998-1999 grant cycle, Montgomery County has been awarded a total of \$19.3 million in State Grant Funds.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BLT PROGRAM

As described above, a developer seeking to build an optional method development in the Commercial - Residential (CR) family of zones is incentivized to purchase BLTs to meet their project's density requirements. Purchase of partial BLTs from the public part of the BLT program helps return money to the easement acquisition fund that can then be used to purchase additional BLTs from interested landowners. Again, as more developments proceed in the coming decade in areas of the County under the CR family of zones, the BLT program is expected to accelerate and provide more funding to the public BLT program.

Progress Towards Goals

The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve is now 32 years old, and it comprises about a third of the County. Farming continues to be a viable industry, and the overall policy goal is to ensure the next generation will be the beneficiaries of productive farmland and open space.

Montgomery County established and met our original Phase I goal of protecting 70,000 acres of farmland: by the end of FY2016, Montgomery County had protected 70,416 acres of farmland through the many preservation programs offered to farmers. The Phase I goal involved protecting agricultural lands under easement with a maximum development potential of 1 residential unit per 25 acres using a variety of easement programs. The County is now moving forward with implementing a Phase II goal for ag land preservation. The Phase II goal is to protect the Agricultural Reserve with a more complete level of farmland protection that further limits residential development and other potential uses that would interfere with the agricultural use of the land in perpetuity.

Figure 21 - Land Preservation Program Acreage Under Preservation chart.

| Land Preservation Program | Years | Acres Under Preservation |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| TDR Easements without Enhanced Preservation | 1980 - 2008 | 48402 |
| TDR Easements Plus Enhanced Preservation | 2009 - 2016 | 3751 |
| PDR Programs Cumulative (BLT, AEP, MALPF, MET, and RLP) | 1980 - 2016 | 22014 |
| Total Acres of Ag Land Preservation | | 70,416 |

As described throughout this chapter, progress towards protecting additional farmland and adding extra layers of protection over already protected land continues despite the challenging fiscal environment over the past decade. The County Office of Agriculture and the Parks and Planning Departments of the Commission have worked on complementary aspects of the effort to preserve a functioning Agricultural Reserve.

Recommendations

The success of farmland preservation programs depends on several factors including the local economy, the local real estate market, and available funding for preservation programs. Having the appropriate preservation tools in place at the time that landowners are interested in participating is a critical challenge to land preservation programs. To continue a successful farmland preservation program, many tools will have to be explored, including innovative program changes, policy and regulatory changes, and alternative funding sources. Several future action items have been identified in the most recent *Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Certification Report* (FY1980 – FY2014) and two are highlighted here as critical for moving forward with farmland preservation over the next 5 years.

First, alternative funding sources need to be explored to continue to fund agricultural easement programs. As described above, State Agricultural Transfer Tax revenue is a steadily declining resource and is not sustainable. The County needs to evaluate alternative public funding mechanisms and consider additional tools to incentivize private sector purchase of easements.

Second, the County intends to create a New Farmer Project to help address the challenges that inhibit small, sustainable-practice farmers and horticulturalists from starting new agricultural businesses. The New Farmer Project is designed to provide mentoring and specialized business training, as do many traditional incubator projects. To speed the start-up process from idea to functioning farm, this program is designed to match new farmers with private land owners to create their new business in a permanent location with a long-term lease. This model is intended to make new farm start-ups more feasible by skipping the need to learn on a designated incubator site before relocating the ir enterprise to a more permanent location. The New Farmer Project is meant to encourage new and innovative forms of agriculture that can help to keep the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve up to speed with the changing farm economy.

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Appendices

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APPENDIX 1 - 1993 GENERAL PLAN REFINEMENT

Refinement of the Goals and Objectives for Montgomery County

The General Plan proposed concentrating development in corridors allowing much of remaining wedges to be preserved for agriculture and open space. This smart growth policy allows more efficient placement of parks and other public services as shown in the strategies below.

The following Park and Recreation objectives and strategies are included in the Land Use, Environmental, and Identity elements of the *1993 General Plan* Refinement-Goals and Objectives for Montgomery County. Only those sections relating to parks have been excerpted. They are compatible with the policy for parks as well as guidelines and objectives for parkland acquisition and development.

LAND USE OBJECTIVES RELATING TO PARKLAND AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Objective: Provide a coordinated and comprehensive system of parks, recreation, and open space.

Strategies:

- Give priority to open space, park, and recreation investments in areas with the greatest existing or proposed residential density and in areas with important environmental features.
- Use open space, parks, and recreation facilities to shape and enhance the development and identity of individual neighborhoods, cluster developments, and existing communities.
- Integrate open space, parks, and recreational facilities into urbanized areas to promote public activity and community identity.
- Plan for and encourage the provision of greenways to connect urban and rural open spaces to provide access to parkland, and to connect major stream valley park areas.

Objective: Preserve farmland and rural open space in the Agricultural Wedge.

Strategies:

- Strengthen land use policies that encourage farmland preservation and rural open space preservation in the Agricultural Wedge.
- Strengthen incentives and regulations to encourage agricultural uses and discourage development within the Agricultural Wedge.
- Limit non-agricultural uses to those that are low intensity or otherwise identified in master plans.
- Continue the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program as well as the County and State farm easement programs as important elements of preserving farmland.
- Continue the function of existing rural centers as the focus of activity for the surrounding countryside.
- Ensure that rural centers primarily serve rural lifestyles and are compatible in size and scale with the intent of the Agricultural Wedge.
- Continue agriculture as the preferred use in the Agricultural Wedge.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL OBJECTIVES RELATING TO PARKLAND

Goal: Conserve and protect natural resources to provide a healthy and beautiful environment for present and future generations. Manage the impacts of human activity on our natural resources in a balanced manner to sustain human, plant, and animal life.

Objective: Preserve natural areas and features that are ecologically unusual, environmentally sensitive, or possess outstanding natural beauty.

Strategies:

- Protect natural resources through identification, public acquisition, conservation easements, public education, citizen involvement, and private conservation efforts.
- Connect parks and conservation areas to form an open space and conservation-oriented greenway system.
- Require open space dedications in new subdivisions that maximize protection of stream valleys and other sensitive environmental features.
- Ensure that development guidelines are reviewed periodically to make certain that they are environmentally sensitive and reflect current technologies and knowledge of the environment.
- Limit construction on soils and slopes not suited for development.

Objective: Conserve county waterways, wetlands, and sensitive parts of stream valleys to minimize flooding, pollution, sedimentation, and damage to the ecology and to preserve natural beauty and open space.

Strategies:

- Identify and protect wetlands and other sensitive parts of watersheds.
- Continue parkland acquisition in key stream valleys.
- Limit the potential damage to life and property from flooding.
- Prohibit development too close to streams, in the 100-year ultimate floodplain, and in flooding danger reach areas of dams, unless no feasible alternative is available.
- Maintain the natural character of drainage areas in the immediate vicinity of streams, rivers, and lakes.
- Plant and retain trees and other vegetation near streams.
- Minimize impacts from construction and operation of public and private facilities located in stream valleys, buffers, and floodplains; first priority should be given to preserving natural areas (avoidance), second priority to mitigation, and third priority to replacement with functional equivalents.
- Develop programs to rehabilitate damaged streams.
- Mandate "no net loss" of wetlands.

Objective: Identify and preserve significant historic, scenic, and cultural features and promote art in public areas.

Strategies:

- Evaluate historic resources for inclusion in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.
- Preserve appropriate sites with their environmental settings and districts that are:
 - Representative of a period or style
 - Architecturally important
 - Locations of important events or activities
 - Associated with important persons
 - Archeological sites
 - Cultural landmarks, or
 - Historic or cultural value.
- Protect historic sites permanently.
- Encourage the preservation, restoration, and use of historic sites and community landmarks to foster community identity.
- Use financial incentives to minimize the impacts of maintaining and restoring historic properties.
- Promote art and cultural opportunities at appropriate public and private locations.
- Encourage compatible development that highlights and enhances historic resources in development or redevelopment near historic resources and in and around historic districts.

APPENDIX 2 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN (CIP) FY17-22

The most recent CIP was approved by the Montgomery County Council on March 26, 2016.

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | ACORN URBAN PARK | New Method: Design for renovation of park | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | ARGYLE LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | ARORA HILLS LOCAL PARK | Infield Renovation | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | AVENEL LOCAL PARK | parking | | | | | X | |
| 118701 | Battery Lane | BATTERY LANE URBAN PARK | Battery Lane Construction | | X | X | | | |
| 118701 | Battery Lane | BATTERY LANE URBAN PARK | Battery Lane Design | X | X | X | | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | BEACH DRIVE PARKWAY | Beach Drive Culvert Retrofits near Meadowbrook | X | | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | BLACK HILL BOAT RENTAL AREA | Design build | X | | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK | Shelters, access | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK | Parking, dog park, rest rooms | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK | Parking, EAR, to Shelters | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK | Parking, trails, amenity access | | | | | X | |
| 998763 | Minor New Construction NL | BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK | SEED Classroom in Black Hill Regional Park (was: Design and construct Yurt, prefab restroom, landscape & civil for a 1/2-acre site, incl. grading, site utilities and SWM.) | X | X | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | BLAIR LOCAL PARK | The current condition of the irrigation system is outdated and needs to be upgraded so we can irrigate the fields properly. | | | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | BLUEBERRY HILL LOCAL PARK | Turf Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | Parking, access at Conservancy | | | | X | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | Access Improvements | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | New/rev. walkway connection between Pine Lake trail and Gude Gardens | | X | | | | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | ADA Renovations to Gude Gardens (accessible bridge to tea house) - Design | | | | X | | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | PHASES VI & VII - Propagation & Maintenance Area B (Service Hill and Overflow Parking) - Facility Planning | | | | X | X | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | ADA Renovations to Formal Gardens - Construction | | X | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | PHASES IX, X & XIII - Tent Site, North Service Drive, Visitors Center and Conservatory POR and Visitors Center Gardens - Facility Planning | | X | X | | | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | Upgrade Visitor Center Exhibits/Wayfinding Signage - Construction | | X | X | | | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | PHASE III - Stream Bank Stabilization - Design | | X | | | | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | ADA Renovations to Gude Gardens (accessible bridge to tea house) - Construction | | | | | X | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | PHASE V - Propagation & Maintenance Area A - Construction | X | | | | | |
| 78702 | Brookside Master Plan Implementation | BROOKSIDE GARDENS | PHASES I & II - Glenallan Ave. Entry & Pking Lot Expansion - Construction | X | | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | BROOKSIDE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Replacement of front ramps, steps | X | | | | | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | BROOKSIDE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Interior design for interior auditorium renovations to be done by Facility Management | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | BUCK BRANCH NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | Turf Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | CABIN JOHN ATHLETIC AREA | Athletic field # 3 currently does not have irrigation. The fields brown out in the summer, it is difficult to effectively use pesticides when we are unable to apply water when needed. Germination of over seeding is less effective as well when natural moisture is untimely. | | | | X | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | CABIN JOHN ATHLETIC AREA | Athletic field # 4, currently does not have irrigation. The fields brown out in the summer, it is difficult to effectively use pesticides when we are unable to apply water when needed. Germination of over seeding is less effective as well when natural moisture is untimely. | | | | X | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | CABIN JOHN ATHLETIC AREA | Repair Potholes/ temp seal for cracks in access drive to Athletic fields and around ice rink | | | X | X | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | CABIN JOHN ICE RINK PROPERTY | Replace NHL and Studio rinks refrigeration system | | X | X | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | CABIN JOHN INDOOR TENNIS PROPERTY | Ancillary Building roof replacement | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | CABIN JOHN LOCAL PARK | parking, porta john, walkway, pads, possible softball field | X | | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---|-------------------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8720 | Ballfields | CABIN JOHN LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access to volleyball and handball courts | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Group Picnic Area | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access, restrooms | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access to picnic shelters | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Group Picnic area - parking, access, restroom | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Parking, EAR, Restrooms | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Field 2 - parking, access | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Tennis area, courts | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Accessible parking and ballfield access Field 4 (drainage, erosion issues) | | X | | | | |
| 998709 | PLAR NL Playgrounds | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Re-Install equipment from Woodside | X | | | | | |
| 838882 | Roofs NL | CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK | Group picnic area restroom bldg. | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | CALVERTON GALWAY LOCAL PARK | Access to fields, tennis courts | | X | | | | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | CALVERTON GALWAY LOCAL PARK | Tennis Court impervious removal and reforestation | | X | | | | |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | CALVERTON GALWAY LOCAL PARK | REPAIR AND RESURFACE parking lot 2 (requested by Brian Lewandowski 8/2014) | X | | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | CAMP SENECA SPECIAL PARK | Lodge at Seneca Creek Parking, access to event center, front entry | | | | | X | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL SPECIAL PARK | Construct Capital Crescent trail connector to Little Falls Stream Valley (behind Bethesda Pool) | X | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | CAPITAL VIEW-HOMEWOOD LOCAL PARK | bball, softball, access, PAB | | | X | | | |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | CAPITAL VIEW-HOMEWOOD LOCAL PARK | SIDEWALK: Reconstruct Path from Plyers Mill Rd to Fayette Rd. | | X | | | | |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | CAPITAL VIEW-HOMEWOOD LOCAL PARK | PAVING: REPAIR AND RESURFACE PATH & DRIVEWAY | X | | | | | |
| 871743 | Caroline Freeland UP | CAROLINE FREELAND URBAN PARK | Caroline Freeland UP Design | | | X | X | X | X |
| 871743 | Caroline Freeland UP | CAROLINE FREELAND URBAN PARK | Caroline Freeland UP Construction | | | | X | X | X |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | CARROLL KNOLLS LOCAL PARK | New Method: Facility planning/design for phased implementation of park improvements | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | CEDAR CREEK LOCAL PARK | Local Park Initiative - Drainage | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | CEDAR CREEK LOCAL PARK | Infield Renovation | | X | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---|--------------------------------------|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8720 | Ballfields | CENTERWAY LOCAL PARK | Infield Renovation | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | CLOVERLY LOCAL PARK | parking, tennis, | | X | X | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | COLUMBIA LOCAL PARK | parking, fields, b-ball, tennis, shelter | | | | X | | |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | COLUMBIA LOCAL PARK | New Method: Design for underutilized facilities and areas of park | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | Countywide | Misc. Playground ramps, for projects built between 2010-2014 | X | X | | | | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | Countywide | Functional plan and program of requirements for nature centers | | | X | | | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | Countywide | Nature Center (Black Hill, Brookside, Locust Grove or Meadowside) Renovation of existing nature center, pending program of requirements or functional plan for nature centers (if ready) | | | | X | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | Countywide | Storm Drain Mapping Phase III | X | | | | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | Countywide | Minor Constructed Wetland Modifications w PPSD | X | | | | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | Countywide | Rain Barrels (countywide) | X | | | | | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | Countywide | Design and construct Little Falls, Long Branch and NW Branch Trail Signage & kiosks | | | X | X | | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | Countywide | Hard Surface Trail Road Intersection Assessment | X | | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | DALE DRIVE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | | X | | | | | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | DAMASCUS NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | | | X | | | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | DAMASCUS RECREATIONAL PARK | Renovate 2 shelters & restroom facility. ADA work too. | | X | | | | |
| 998709 | PLAR NL Playgrounds | DAMASCUS RECREATIONAL PARK | Design and construct play area renovation | | X | X | | | |
| 998799 | Minor New Construction LP | DARNESTOWN LOCAL PARK | Design and construct additional parking on newly acquired property (Darnestown) | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | DEWEY LOCAL PARK | parking, soccer, pathways | | | | | | X |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | DEWEY LOCAL PARK | Design for repurpose of courts | X | | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | DEWEY LOCAL PARK | FY18 construction | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | EAST NORBECK LP | Misc. Items not completed by contractor | | X | | | | |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | EDITH THROCKMORTON NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | New Method: Design for renovation of park | X | X | | | | |
| 138701 | Elm Street UP | ELM STREET URBAN PARK | Elm Street UP Design | X | X | | | | |
| 138702 | Elm Street UP | ELM STREET URBAN PARK | Elm Street UP Construction | X | X | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 128701 | ADA LP | FLEMING LOCAL PARK | parking, access to softball field, shelter | | | | | | X |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | FOREST GLEN NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | Pave parking lot and bioswale work (requested by Brian Lewendowski 8/2014) | X | | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | GLEN HILLS LOCAL PARK | Re-install Woodside equipment | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | GLENFIELD LOCAL PARK | parking, courts, diamond field | | | | | X | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | GOOD HOPE LOCAL PARK | Cost-sharing with DGS, misc. work | | X | | | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | GOOD HOPE LOCAL PARK | Good Hope Local Park | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | GREENBRIAR LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 998799 | Minor New Construction LP | GREENBRIAR LOCAL PARK | | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | GREENWOOD LOCAL PARK | parking, various courts, shelter | | | | | X | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | GUNNER'S LAKE LOCAL PARK | Turf Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 871742 | Hillandale LP | HILLANDALE LOCAL PARK | Hillandale LP Design | X | X | X | X | X | |
| 871742 | Hillandale LP | HILLANDALE LOCAL PARK | Hillandale LP Construction | | | X | X | X | |
| 808494 | Restoration of Historic Structures | JESUP-BLAIR LOCAL PARK | Jesup Blair House Stabilize and secure | X | | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | JOHN HAINES NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | FM construction | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | JOHNSON LOCAL PARK | pavilion, sidewalk, parking | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | JOHNSON LOCAL PARK | parking, pathways from transit stop, courts | | | | | X | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | JOHNSON LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | JOHNSON LOCAL PARK | Infield Renovation | | X | | | | |
| 871552 | Josiah Henson HP | JOSIAH HENSON SPECIAL PARK | Josiah Henson HP Design | X | X | X | X | X | |
| 871552 | Josiah Henson HP | JOSIAH HENSON SPECIAL PARK | Josiah Henson HP Construction | | X | X | X | X | |
| 138702 | Kemp Mill UP | KEMP MILL URBAN PARK | Kemp Mill UP Construction | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | KINGS CROSSING LOCAL PARK | Infield Renovation | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | LAYHILL LOCAL PARK | parking, field access, shelter | | | X | | | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | LAYHILL LOCAL PARK | Bridge F-06-01 Replacement with ET tech | | X | | | | |
| 38703 | Laytonia RP | LAYTONIA RECREATIONAL PARK | Laytonia RP Construction | X | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | LEAMAN LOCAL PARK | Turf Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | LITTLE BENNETT CAMP GROUND | Design and Install water feature/playground | X | | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | LITTLE BENNETT CAMP GROUND | Pave entrance to contact station | X | | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | LITTLE BENNETT CAMP GROUND | Upgrade camp sites loop D to full hook-ups | | | X | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|--|--|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | LITTLE BENNETT MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Grinder pump system replacement | | | X | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | LITTLE BENNETT MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Resurface maintenance yard parking lot (req. #869) and employee parking area possibly with NPDES work | | X | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | LITTLE BENNETT REGIONAL PARK | Parking, EAR, camping, misc. | | | X | | | |
| 138703 | Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area | LITTLE BENNETT REGIONAL PARK | Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area - Design | | | X | X | X | X |
| 138703 | Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area | LITTLE BENNETT REGIONAL PARK | Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area - Construction | | | | | X | X |
| 871744 | Little Bennett Regional Park Trail Connector | LITTLE BENNETT REGIONAL PARK | Little Bennett Regional Park Trail Connector - Design | | | | | | X |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | LITTLE FALLS STREAM VALLEY PARK | Little Falls Parkway Concrete Swale Retrofit Design | X | | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | LITTLE FALLS STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #1 | Little Falls SVU 1 Stabilization with Bridge Replacement just upstream of USACE reservoir (bridge P17-01) | X | | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | LOCUST GROVE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Access to nature center, parking | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | LOCUST GROVE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Design and construct railing | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | LONG BRANCH LOCAL PARK | parking, tennis, pathways | | | | | X | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | LONG BRANCH-GARLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | Bridge D77-01 Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | LONG BRANCH-WAYNE LOCAL PARK | Park renovations, concept/facility plan, phase 1 design for phased implementation of improvements (playground is phase 1) | X | X | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | LONG BRANCH-WAYNE LOCAL PARK | Phase 1 Construction | | | X | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | LONGWOOD LOCAL PARK | parking, tennis, walkways | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | MAPLEWOOD-ALTA VISTA LOCAL PARK | parking, bball, tennis, softball | | X | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | MLK Jr. RP (Parking Lot next to Baseball Field # 1 and Soccer Field # 3) Parking, EAR to baseball and softball fields (carryover from FY16) | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | The condition of 2 set of bleachers for the regional baseball field are in dire need of replacement. Infield needs renovation concurrently. | X | | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---------------------------|--|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8720 | Ballfields | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | Irrigation, field re-grading, ADA access, bleachers, and planning for lights of Field # 3 which is full size soccer field | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | Irrigation | | | | | | X |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | Field # 2 is a softball field with the lack of irrigation it is impossible to sustain turf growth during the summer months with a higher volume of users. Fields dry out and the turf suffers. | | | | | | X |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | The condition of all 2 sets of bleachers for the regional fields: Softball are in dire need of replacement. | | | | | | X |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | MARTIN LUTHER KING RECREATIONAL PARK | Resurface paths and parking | | | | X | X | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | MATTHEW HENSON STATE PARK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Wheaton to Matthew Henson Trail Segment (next priority trail from the Countywide Park Trails Plan) Facility plan for trail extension from Wheaton RP to Poplar Run & the Matthew Henson Trail | X | | | | | |
| 998763 | Minor New Construction NL | MAYDALE CONSERVATION PARK | Renovate nature center | X | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | MEADOWBROOK LOCAL PARK | EAR, Amenities, Trails, Parking | X | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MEADOWBROOK LOCAL PARK | Local Park Initiative - Drainage | | | | | | X |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | MEADOWBROOK LOCAL PARK | Parking lot south of woodbine street. Reconstruct parking lot. | | X | | | | |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | MEADOWBROOK LOCAL PARK | Parking Lot north of Beach Drive at Pinehurst Pkwy. Pavement removal, informal SWM and resurface parking lot that is being used as a staging area. | | X | | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | MEADOWBROOK MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Resurface maintenance yard area? Replace Employee Parking lot and Repave Lot adjacent to bldg. and add HC pkg. remove asphalt and refigure islands by 5 feet. Need SC permit | X | | | | | |
| 838882 | Roofs NL | MEADOWBROOK MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Replace Roof | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | MEADOWSIDE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Parking, access to bldg. and nature play space | | | X | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | MEADOWSIDE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Repair Parking Lot | | X | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | MEADOWSIDE NATURE CENTER PROPERTY | Meadowside Nature Center Pond (Sunfish Pond) Riser Rehab | X | | | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | MLK JR. MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Repave entire maintenance yard. | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MOUNT ZION LOCAL PARK | Infield Renovation | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | MOUNT ZION LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 838882 | Roofs NL | NEEDWOOD MANSION PROPERTY | Design (FY17); replace roof (FY18) | | | X | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | NOLTE LOCAL PARK | parking, walkways, fields, bball | | X | X | | | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | NORTH BRANCH STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | North Branch Trail Extension (second priority from the Countywide Park Trails Plan) Facility plan for final northern segment from the Preserve at Rock Creek to Bowie Mill Road | | | | | X | |
| 871541 | North Branch Trail | NORTH BRANCH STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | North Branch Trail Renovation | X | X | | | | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | NORTH BRANCH STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Design North Branch Trail. Construction funded in project #871541 | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | NORTH CHEVY CHASE LOCAL PARK | Access near PAB | | | | X | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | NORTHWEST BRANCH RECREATIONAL PARK | Irrigation | X | | | | | |
| 118704 | Northwest Branch Recreational Park | NORTHWEST BRANCH RECREATIONAL PARK | Northwest Branch Recreational Park-Athletic Area - Design | | | | | X | |
| 118704 | Northwest Branch Recreational Park | NORTHWEST BRANCH RECREATIONAL PARK | Northwest Branch Recreational Park-Athletic Area - Construction | X | | | | | X |
| 858710 | Trails Natural Surface | NORTHWEST BRANCH STREAM VALLEY PARK | Pedestrian Bridge | X | | | | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | NORTHWEST BRANCH STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #4 | Northwest Branch SVU at Burnt Mills Dam Sidewalk connection on west side of MD 29 from dam parking lot to shopping center crosswalk | | | X | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | NORWOOD LOCAL PARK | Parking, access to courts, play fields | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | NORWOOD LOCAL PARK | Turf Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | NORWOOD LOCAL PARK | Facility planning or design for phased park improvements (timed for inclusion in FY21-26 CIP) | | | X | | | |
| 998705 | PLAR LP Park Building Renovations | NORWOOD LOCAL PARK | Lab renovation | X | | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|------------------------------------|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 871540 | Urban Park Elements | NORWOOD LOCAL PARK | Dog park and/or skate park following facility plan study for repurposing in FY19-20 | | | | | X | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, access Fields 4,5 | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, Access to Fields 1,3, skatepark | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, Access to Field 2 | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, access to restroom, picnic area | | | | | X | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Design and install irrigation systems for ballfield # 1 | | | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Design and install irrigation systems for ballfield # 3 | | | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Design and install irrigation systems for ballfield # 4 | | | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | OLNEY MANOR RECREATIONAL PARK | Field #1 located at Olney Manor Recreational park is in need of a complete renovation. The infield has a depression along third base and in front of second base, which holds water. (Grading and Drainage) | | | X | | | |
| 871745 | Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park | OVID HAZEN WELLS RECREATIONAL PARK | Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park - Design | | | X | X | X | X |
| 871745 | Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park | OVID HAZEN WELLS RECREATIONAL PARK | Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park - Construction | | | | X | X | X |
| 858710 | Trails Natural Surface | PIEDMONT CROSSING LOCAL PARK | Western Piedmont | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | PILGRIM HILL LOCAL PARK | Parking, PAB | | | | | | X |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | PINECREST LOCAL PARK | New Method: Design | X | | | | | |
| 998799 | Minor New Construction LP | PINECREST LOCAL PARK | Install loop path around ballfield; fix drainage issues. | | X | | | | |
| 871546 | PLAR LP Resurfacing | PINECREST LOCAL PARK | Repair and resurface parking lot & add conc. Curbing & SD pipe | X | | | | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | POTOMAC HORSE CENTER SPECIAL PARK | Potomac Horse Center Retrofit | X | | | | | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | QUINCE ORCHARD VALLEY NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | Remove Tennis Court/trail/wall and replace pedestrian bridge | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | RANDOLPH HILLS LOCAL PARK | Parking, tennis and b-ball courts, shelter, field | | | | | | X |
| 128701 | ADA LP | RAY'S MEADOW LOCAL PARK | Parking/ramp design construct | X | X | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | RAY'S MEADOW LOCAL PARK | FY18 construction, will need funding from ADA LP | | X | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---|--|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | RICKMAN FARM HORSE SPECIAL PARK | Resurface entire road and driveways | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | RIDGE ROAD RECREATIONAL PARK | PURCHASE bleachers for stadium field and provide ADA access | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | RIDGE ROAD RECREATIONAL PARK | Infield Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | RIDGE ROAD RECREATIONAL PARK | Design and construct new ice rink | | | | X | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | ROCK CREEK REGIONAL PARK | Shelters, parking, trails | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | ROCK CREEK REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access to picnic area/shelter | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | ROCK CREEK REGIONAL PARK | Parking and walkway for Archery Range | X | | | | | |
| 998709 | PLAR NL Playgrounds | ROCK CREEK REGIONAL PARK | Design for Lake Needwood adventure and nature play area, construction to be stand-alone PDF | | X | X | | | |
| 998709 | PLAR NL Playgrounds | ROCK CREEK REGIONAL PARK | Design and construct small play area | X | | | | | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Design Trail heads and amenities | | | X | | | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Construct Trail heads and amenities | | | | X | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Ten pilot intersection improvements | X | X | | | | |
| 858710 | Trails Natural Surface | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #15 | Upper Rock Creek SVP | X | | | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Beach Drive, Rock Creek SVU 2(MC-P46) (Mormon Temple Trib Parking Lot). Parking lot to be replaced, accessible parking and access to the trail added, while removing unnecessary impervious. Swale between trail and parking lot to be enhanced. | X | | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Mormon Temple Tributary | X | | | | | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Feasibility and Concept connecting the Grosvenor Metro to the Rock Creek Trail | | | X | X | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Construct Kensington Parkway to Connecticut Ave. improvements and overlay #2 including crossing at Standhope and drainage improvements. | | X | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Design and Construct Ireland Drive Connector Trail to Rock Creek Trail #3a | | X | X | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|------------------------------------|--|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Construct Levelle Road to Old Spring Road - basic improvements and overlay - #3b | | | X | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #2 | Construction of safety improvements of Sligo Creek Trail near Schuyler Avenue | X | | | | | |
| 998709 | PLAR NL Playgrounds | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Puller Park | X | | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Cedar Lane to Franklin Street - repair by FM | X | | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Design and Construct Connecticut Ave approach and under pass Design #1 | X | X | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Beach Drive/Connecticut Avenue coordination with SHA project - widen Beach Drive, design and construct new trail segment | X | X | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Franklin Street to Parkwood Terrace - trail repair by FM, 1,800 LF | X | | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | ROCK CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Design and Construct STA 319+00 to Saul Road - realignment #4 | X | X | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | Rock Creek Trail SVU7 and Drake Drive NCP | Design and construct improvements to trail connector from Russett Road (includes boardwalk and drainage improvements) | X | X | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | ROCKWOOD SPECIAL PARK | Rockwood Manor Design a Reconfigure entrance and both main parking areas. | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | ROSEMARY HILLS- LYTTONSVILLE LOCAL PARK | EAR to amenities (Citizen Complaint) | | X | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | ROSEMARY HILLS- LYTTONSVILLE LOCAL PARK | Parking, field access | | | | | | X |
| 128701 | ADA LP | SADDLEBROOK LOCAL PARK | parking, soccer field, b-ball | | | | X | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | SENECA LANDING SPECIAL PARK | Seneca Store | X | | | | | |
| 808494 | Restoration of Historic Structures | SENECA LANDING SPECIAL PARK | Seneca Store Rehab interior and exterior. Store to function as working Ag Reserve commercial center. | X | | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Sligo Creek Stream Restoration Design | X | | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Sligo Creek at Brunett | X | | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---|---|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Construct Trail heads and amenities | | | | X | | |
| 768673 | Trails Hard Surface Design and Construction | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK | Design Trail heads and amenities | | | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #3 | Turf Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #4 | Inwood Tributary | X | | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #4 | Roswell Tributary | X | | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #4 | Sligo Creek Trail Connector to Tenbrook Drive | X | | | | | |
| 888754 | Trails Hard Surface Renovation | SLIGO CREEK STREAM VALLEY PARK UNIT #4 | Sligo Creek Trail repair at Mississippi Avenue | X | | | | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | SLIGO PARKWAY PROPERTY | Drainage Improvements and Bus Stop | | | X | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | SLIGO PARKWAY PROPERTY | Lot at Dallas Avenue: The project will include reconfiguration of the parking lot and trail as well as pavement removal and resurfacing. | | X | | | | |
| 78701 | Pollution Prevention | SLIGO PARKWAY PROPERTY | Sligo Creek Parkway Retrofits Forest Glen to Colesville | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | SLIGO-DENNIS AVENUE LOCAL PARK | parking, b-ball, tennis | | | | X | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | SLIGO-DENNIS AVENUE LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN MINI GOLF/SPLASH PLAYGROUND AREA | Parking, restroom, misc. | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN MINI GOLF/SPLASH PLAYGROUND AREA | Paved parking and EAR to Mini Golf and Archery | | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, Access to baseball fields, courts, misc. | | | | | X | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, misc. to baseball/softball fields | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Soccer Field access | | | | | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Central park pond - access, trails, misc. | | | | X | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|--|------------------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Parking, access to community gardens | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Paved EAR to Pavilions (2) | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Trail, parking, access upgrades | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Ballfields, parking lots | | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Surveys - archery, exercise pads | X | | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Picnic shelters, horseshoes, parking | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | Infield Renovation | X | | | | | |
| 871746 | S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field - Design | X | X | X | X | | |
| 871746 | S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field - Construction | | X | X | X | | |
| 858710 | Trails Natural Surface | SOUTH GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK | South Germantown Bike Park | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | SOUTH GUNNER'S BRANCH LOCAL PARK | Playground project - parking, access | X | X | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | SOUTH GUNNER'S BRANCH LOCAL PARK | FY18 construction | | X | X | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | SOUTHEAST OLNEY LOCAL PARK | | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | SPENCERVILLE LOCAL PARK | Parking, access to cricket fields | | | | | | X |
| 128701 | ADA LP | STEWARTOWN LOCAL PARK | parking, courts, shelter, diamond | | | | X | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | STONEBROOK LOCAL PARK | parking, PAB, tennis courts | | | | X | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | STRATTON LOCAL PARK | ADA Improvements (DOJ) changed from FY16 to FY17 | X | | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | SUNDOWN ROAD LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | X | | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | SUNDOWN ROAD LOCAL PARK | FY18-19 construction | | | X | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | TAKOMA - PINEY BRANCH LOCAL PARK | ADA Improvements | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | TILDEN WOODS LOCAL PARK | parking, courts, softball/soccer | | | | | X | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8720 | Ballfields | TILDEN WOODS LOCAL PARK | Fencing Replacement | | X | | | | |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | TRAVILLE LOCAL PARK | New 13.7-acre park on land deeded by developer in N. Potomac (timed for inclusion in FY21-26 CIP) | | | | X | | |
| 998705 | PLAR LP Park Building Renovations | VALLEY MILL SPECIAL PARK | Restroom renovation | X | X | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | VALLEY MILL SPECIAL PARK | Valley Mill South of Culvert | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | VEIRS MILL LOCAL PARK | PAB | | | | X | | |
| 958776 | Facility Planning NL | WALL LOCAL PARK | Facility planning to renovate park (if ready) | | X | | | | |
| 871540 | Urban Park Elements | WALL LOCAL PARK | Phase 1 improvements following facility plan (to include dog park) | | | X | X | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | WARING STATION LOCAL PARK | Playground project - parking, access, b-ball, field, gazebo | X | X | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | WARING STATION LOCAL PARK | FY18 construction | | X | X | | | |
| 838882 | Roofs NL | WATERS HOUSE SPECIAL PARK | Convert to standing seam metal | | X | | | | |
| 818571 | Stream Protection | WAVERLY-SCHUYLKILL NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | Waverly Schuylkill Sign Installation | X | | | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | WELLS NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | FY18 construction | | X | | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | WEST FAIRLAND LOCAL PARK | Convert to 90 baseball | | X | X | | | |
| 998703 | PLAR LP Play Equipment | WEST FAIRLAND LOCAL PARK | | X | | | | | |
| 957775 | Facility Planning LP | WHEATON COMMUNITY BUILDING PROPERTY | Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center park design for park improvements in conjunction with DGS project | X | | | | | |
| 128701 | ADA LP | WHEATON FOREST LOCAL PARK | Parking, football, softball, shelter | | | | | | X |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | WHEATON MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Entrance drive and all maint. area (Kemp Mill Road) | | | X | | | |
| 838882 | Roofs NL | WHEATON MAINTENANCE YARD PROPERTY | Design & construct Roof | X | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Parking and access at ice rink | | | | | | X |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Parking lot, trails, picnic shelters | | | | X | X | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access to dog park and sports pavilion | | | | X | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Parking, Access, - Athletic Area (Fields 1,2, 3) | | | X | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access to Handball Field | | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Parking, access to Field 1 | | X | | | | |
| 128702 | ADA NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Prelim. Design restroom/shelter in Athletic Area | X | X | | | | |

| PDF # | PDF Name | Park Name | Project Detail | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 | FY21 | FY22 |
|--------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8720 | Ballfields | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Fix Drainage Problems | | | X | | | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Redesign - Existing Field #1 (90' ball diamond) is currently in need of moderate upgrades due to inefficient layout, undulating and potentially unsafe field surface, and outdated facilities. | | | | | X | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Field #1 (90' ball diamond) Irrigation | | | | | X | |
| 8720 | Ballfields | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Irrigation - Due to the lack of moisture and dry summer conditions, Wheaton Regional Park athletic field # 2 develop field issues such as root damage, which inhibits growth causing the grass to be very brittle and dry. In addition, with the high volume of use on the playing fields, during league play, further damage causes poor playing conditions. | | | | | | X |
| 998773 | Enterprise | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Wheaton RP Sports Pavilion Replace roof skylights and paint steel structure | X | | | | | |
| 998773 | Enterprise | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Purchase replacement carousel | | | X | | | |
| 998763 | Minor New Construction NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Wheaton Carousel Parking Lot (WRP SOUTH) | | X | | | | |
| 998763 | Minor New Construction NL | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Wheaton Shorefield Area (WRP NORTH) | X | X | | | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Adventure PG Drainage Impr | | | | | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Wheaton RP Athletic Area Replace restroom facility due to failed water lines. Connect to public water & sewer. (J Loveless 2007,) | X | X | | | | |
| 998708 | PLAR NL Minor Renovation | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Shorefield-Carousel area trail | | X | X | | | |
| 871540 | Urban Park Elements | WHEATON REGIONAL PARK | Design and upgrade existing dog park | X | X | X | | | |
| 871544 | PLAR NL Resurfacing | WHEATON STABLES PROPERTY | repave parking lot | X | | | | | |
| 998799 | Minor New Construction LP | WHEATON-CLARIDGE LOCAL PARK | | X | | | | | |
| 998702 | PLAR LP Minor Renovation | WHEATON-CLARIDGE LOCAL PARK | Bridges E19-01&E19-02 (MPK19B) to be renovated into overlook and new vehicular bridge built; Renovations | X | | | | | |
| 871540 | Urban Park Elements | WOODSIDE URBAN PARK | Relocate basketball court to expand skatepark | X | | | | | |
| 138705 | Woodside Urban Park | WOODSIDE URBAN PARK | Woodside Urban Park Renovation - Design | X | X | X | | | |
| 138705 | Woodside Urban Park | WOODSIDE URBAN PARK | Woodside Urban Park Renovation - Construction | X | X | X | X | | |

APPENDIX 3 - LAND ACQUISITION NEEDS TO 2030 AND BEYOND

The following tables (to be finalized) include proposed parkland acquisition recommended in approved Area Master Plans. As shown below, a total of 6,346 acres is recommended. Of this total, 5,173 acres are recommended for conservation purposes and 1,173 acres to accommodate future recreation needs. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, a great deal of natural-resource based recreation occurs in natural areas, which would be found on conservation land. The detailed table includes information on the specific park and notes whether it is short, mid, or long range priority.

2017 Future Land Acquisition Needs to the Year 2030 and Beyond

| Park Types | Acres | Conservation | Recreation |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Countywide | | | |
| Stream Valley | 3,377 | 3,377 | |
| Regional | 385 | 258 | 127 |
| Recreational | 315 | 0 | 315 |
| Conservation | 1,531 | 1,531 | 0 |
| Special | 526 | 0 | 526 |
| County-wide Subtotal | 6,134 | 5,166 | 968 |
| Community Use | | | |
| Urban | 12 | | 12 |
| Neighborhood | 3 | | 3 |
| Local | 190 | | 190 |
| Neighborhood Conservation Area | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| Community Use Subtotal | 212 | 7 | 205 |
| TOTAL | 6,346 | 5,173 | 1,173 |
| Percent | 100% | 82% | 18% |

2012 Future Land Acquisition Needs to the Year 2030 and Beyond - 2017 DATA INCOMING

| PARK NAME | PLANNING AREA NUMBER | PLANNING AREA NAME | AUTHORITY | ESTIMATED COSTS* | ACRES BY PARK | SHORT RANGE (2011-2015) PRIORITY 1 | MID-RANGE (2016-2020) PRIORITY 2 | LONG RANGE (2020+) PRIORITY 3 | STATE GOALS | LOCAL GOALS | NOTES |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|--|
| Batchellors Forest LP | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$0 | 17.3 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Unmet rec needs in residential community |
| Cabin Branch LP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$0 | 10.5 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Unmet rec needs in new community |
| Cabin Branch SVP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$0 | 74.3 | 1 | | | 2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Resource protection |
| Clarksburg Village LP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$0 | 8.1 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Unmet rec needs in new community |
| Ednor Soapstone Quarry CP | 15 | Patuxent | Cloverly Master Plan | \$800,000 | 0.8 | 1 | | | 2,3,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,12 | Protection of archeological/cultural resources |
| Hoyles Mill CP | 18 | Lower Seneca | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$300,000 | 506.4 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,11 | Resource protection of unique diabase geology |
| Fairland Recreational Park | 34 | Fairland | Fairland Master Plan | \$0 | 28.9 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,11 | Protection of coastal plain influence resources |
| Little Seneca Greenway SVP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$0 | 218.3 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,6,7 | Stream valley park completion/protection |
| Fenton Street UP | 36 | Silver Spring | Silver Spring Master Plan | \$1,000,000 | 0.5 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Long planned urban park |
| Fleming Local Park | 30 | North Bethesda | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$0 | 12.0 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,11,12 | High quality down-county forest, preserves historic resource setting |
| Germantown Town Center UP | 19 | Germantown | Germantown Master Plan | \$0 | 1.6 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Urban open space |
| Upper Paint Branch SVP | 34 | Fairland | Fairland Master Plan | \$0 | 132.9 | 1 | | | 2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Greenway Village NCA | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$0 | 5.4 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Known area for Maryland Checkerspot butterfly |
| Hyattstown Forest CP | 10 | Bennett | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$2,600,000 | 85.0 | 1 | | | 2,3,5,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,12 | Protection of prominent bluff with Civil War connection |
| Limestone CP | 16 | Martinsburg | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$3,300,000 | 107.5 | 1 | | | 2,3,6 | 2,3,4,5,7,11 | Resource protection of unique habitat |
| Peach Orchard NCA | 28 | Cloverly | Cloverly Master Plan | \$100,000 | 1.4 | 1 | | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Resource protection |
| Rachel Carson CP | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$300,000 | 9.0 | 1 | | | 2,3,5,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,11 | Resource protection; important trail connection |
| Reddy Branch SVU 1 | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$1,000,000 | 1.5 | 1 | | | 2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |

| PARK NAME | PLANNING AREA NUMBER | PLANNING AREA NAME | AUTHORITY | ESTIMATED COSTS* | ACRES BY PARK | SHORT RANGE (2011-2015) PRIORITY 1 | MID-RANGE (2016-2020) PRIORITY 2 | LONG RANGE (2020+) PRIORITY 3 | STATE GOALS | LOCAL GOALS | NOTES |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|--|
| Ridge Road Recreational Park | 19 | Germantown | Germantown Master Plan | \$900,000 | 2.2 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Recreational needs/expansion |
| River Road Shale Barrens CP | 15 | Poolesville | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$2,000,000 | 153.4 | 1 | | | 2,3,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,11 | Resource protection of unique geology- Triassic shale |
| Rock Creek SVU #1 | 36 | Silver Spring | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$2,000,000 | 3.0 | 1 | | | 2,3,4,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Resource protection- buffers National Park forest |
| White Flint NP | 35 | North Bethesda | White Flint Sector Plan | \$0 | 2.6 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Needed amenity space in redeveloping transit center |
| White Flint UP | 35 | North Bethesda | White Flint Sector Plan | \$7,500,000 | 1.7 | 1 | | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Needed amenity space in redeveloping transit center |
| Hawkins Creamery Road LP | 11 | Damascus | Damascus Master Plan | \$400,000 | 13.2 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Undeveloped school site potentially available for Park |
| Hawlings River SVP | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$6,300,000 | 211.2 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Little Bennett Creek SVP | 11 | Damascus | Damascus Master Plan | \$8,800,000 | 291.7 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,6,7,11 | Significant Regional Park expansion |
| Magruder SVU 2 | 11 | Damascus | Damascus Master Plan | \$100,000 | 0.8 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Muddy Branch SVU 1 | 24 | Darnestown | Potomac Master Plan | \$1,600,000 | 52.8 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Muddy Branch SVU 2 | 25 | Travilah | Potomac Master Plan | \$1,700,000 | 54.5 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| North Branch SVU 2 | 22 | Upper Rock Creek | Upper Rock Creek Master Plan | \$4,300,000 | 142.7 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| North Branch SVU 3 | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$2,600,000 | 86.3 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| North Branch SVU 3 | 22 | Upper Rock Creek | Upper Rock Creek Master Plan | \$3,300,000 | 108.2 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Northwest Branch SVU 7 | 28 | Cloverly | Cloverly Master Plan | \$1,000,000 | 31.4 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| North Branch SVU 4 | 22 | Upper Rock Creek | Upper Rock Creek Master Plan | \$700,000 | 23.3 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| North Germantown Greenway SVP | 19 | Germantown | Germantown Master Plan | \$500,000 | 15.7 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Northwest Branch Recreational Park | 28 | Cloverly | Cloverly Master Plan | \$400,000 | 10.9 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet recreational needs |
| Reddy Branch SVU 2 | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$6,500,000 | 215.2 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Olney Manor Recreational Park | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$900,000 | 26.9 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |

| PARK NAME | PLANNING AREA NUMBER | PLANNING AREA NAME | AUTHORITY | ESTIMATED COSTS* | ACRES BY PARK | SHORT RANGE (2011-2015) PRIORITY 1 | MID-RANGE (2016-2020) PRIORITY 2 | LONG RANGE (2020+) PRIORITY 3 | STATE GOALS | LOCAL GOALS | NOTES |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---|------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|--|
| Rock Creek SVU16 | 22 | Upper Rock Creek | Upper Rock Creek Master Plan | \$800,000 | 23.8 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Rock Creek SVU12 | 22 | Upper Rock Creek | Upper Rock Creek Master Plan | \$700,000 | 21.2 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Sandy Spring Village Green UP | 15 | Patuxent | Sandy Spring Ashton Master Plan | \$100,000 | 0.4 | | 2 | | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Unmet urban park/gathering space needs |
| Ten Mile Creek Greenway SVP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$6,300,000 | 209.4 | | 2 | | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7,11 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Black Hill Regional Park | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$1,200,000 | 37.9 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet recreational needs |
| Blockhouse Point CP | 24 | Darnestown | Potomac Master Plan | \$400,000 | 10.4 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 2,3,4,5,7,11 | Resource protection |
| Brickyard Road LP | 29 | Potomac | Potomac Master Plan | \$700,000 | 20.3 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet park needs |
| Broad Run SVP | 16 | Martinsburg | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$16,000,000 | 519.1 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 2,3,4,5,6,7,11 | Master planned future stream valley park and trail |
| Bucklodge Branch SVP | 18 | Lower Seneca | Agricultural and Rural Open Space | \$3,600,000 | 117.4 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Dry Seneca Creek SVU 1 | 18 | Lower Seneca | Agricultural and Rural Open Space | \$4,900,000 | 160.4 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Dry Seneca Creek SVU 2 | 18 | Lower Seneca | Agricultural and Rural Open Space | \$2,200,000 | 71.9 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,6,7 | Watershed protection |
| Gaithersburg West LP | 20 | Gaithersburg Vicinity | Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan | \$500,000 | 14.0 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,6,7 | Unmet park needs |
| Glen Hills LP | 25 | Travilah | Potomac Master Plan | \$300,000 | 9.7 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Unmet park needs |
| Great Seneca SVU 2 | 14 | Goshen | Agricultural and Rural Open Space | \$200,000 | 5.9 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |
| Great Seneca SVU 4 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$1,500,000 | 47.5 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |
| Great Seneca SVU 5 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$4,800,000 | 158.5 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |
| Great Seneca SVU 6 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$3,000,000 | 99.9 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |
| Great Seneca SVU 7 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$100,000 | 1.0 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |
| Great Seneca SVU 8 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$500,000 | 16.4 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |
| Great Seneca SVU 9 | 11 | Damascus | Damascus Master Plan | \$600,000 | 18.7 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection, stream valley park expansion |

| PARK NAME | PLANNING AREA NUMBER | PLANNING AREA NAME | AUTHORITY | ESTIMATED COSTS* | ACRES BY PARK | SHORT RANGE (2011-2015) PRIORITY 1 | MID-RANGE (2016-2020) PRIORITY 2 | LONG RANGE (2020+) PRIORITY 3 | STATE GOALS | LOCAL GOALS | NOTES |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|---|------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---|
| Gude Drive Recreational Park | 22 | Upper Rock Creek | Upper Rock Creek Master Plan | \$0 | 164.5 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet recreational needs |
| King's Bridge LP | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$1,000,000 | 30.3 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet recreational needs |
| Linthicum West Recreational Park | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$2,500,000 | 81.6 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet recreational needs |
| Little Bennett Greenway SVP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$1,200,000 | 36.8 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,6,7 | Watershed protection |
| Little Bennett Regional Park | 10 | Bennett | Planning Board | \$10,500,000 | 347.5 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,6,7 | Regional park expansion |
| Long Branch SVU 1A | 37 | Takoma Park | Takoma Park Master Plan | \$100,000 | 1.2 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Various park and rec needs |
| LSC West LP | 20 | Gaithersburg Vicinity | Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan | \$500,000 | 15.5 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Needed amenities in developing science corridor |
| LSC West UP | 20 | Gaithersburg Vicinity | Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan | \$100,000 | 0.5 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7 | Needed amenities in developing science corridor |
| Maplewood Alta Vista UP | 35 | Bethesda | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$200,000 | 5.1 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Urban open space and rec potential in existing neighborhood |
| Oak Drive LP | 11 | Damascus | Damascus Master Plan | \$400,000 | 13.0 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet rec needs |
| Oaks Landfill SP | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$0 | 501.3 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Potential transfer of former municipal landfill |
| Ovid Hazen Wells Greenway SVP | 13 | Clarksburg | Clarksburg Master Plan | \$1,000,000 | 31.6 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Patuxent River Watershed CP | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$7,100,000 | 236.1 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 3,4,5,6,7 | Watershed protection, includes large forested areas |
| Piney Branch Road UP | 32 | Kemp Mill/Four Corners | East Silver Spring Master Plan | \$100,000 | 0.4 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet park and rec needs |
| Red Door Store Historical/Cultural Park | 23 | Olney | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$500,000 | 16.3 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,6 | 1,2,3,4,5,7,12 | Eliminate inholding to a culturally significant park area |
| Rock Creek Unit #2 | 36 | Silver Spring | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$0 | 15.1 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Park expansion, resource protection |
| Rock Run SVP | 29 | Potomac | Potomac Master Plan | \$300,000 | 8.0 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Stream valley park expansion |
| Selden Island | 17 | Poolesville | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$12,000,000 | 400.0 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7,12 | Protection of archeological resources; water quality protection |

| PARK NAME | PLANNING AREA NUMBER | PLANNING AREA NAME | AUTHORITY | ESTIMATED COSTS* | ACRES BY PARK | SHORT RANGE (2011-2015) PRIORITY 1 | MID-RANGE (2016-2020) PRIORITY 2 | LONG RANGE (2020+) PRIORITY 3 | STATE GOALS | LOCAL GOALS | NOTES |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--|------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--|
| Seneca Landing SP | 24 | Darnestown | Agricultural and Rural Open Space | \$300,000 | 8.6 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Eliminate inholding to a culturally significant park area |
| Seneca Meadow UP | 19 | Germantown | Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan | \$100,000 | 0.4 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet recreational and park needs |
| Takoma Academy LP | 37 | Takoma Park | East Silver Spring Master Plan | \$ 800,000 | 25.8 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 1,3,4,5,7,14 | Unmet recreational and park needs in dense area of the down-county |
| Triadelphia Water Supply CP | 23 | Olney | Olney Master Plan | \$700,000 | 22.3 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Water supply and resource protection |
| Upcounty Regional Services Center UP | 19 | Germantown | Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan | \$100,000 | 0.9 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Unmet park and rec needs |
| Upper Paint Branch SVP | 28 | Cloverly | Legacy Open Space Master Plan | \$100,000 | 3.3 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Water Tower UP | 35 | North Bethesda | White Flint Sector Plan | \$100,000 | 0.7 | | | 3 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Urban open space needs |
| Wildcat Branch SVU 1 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$1,400,000 | 45.1 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| Wildcat Branch SVU 2 | 14 | Goshen | Damascus Master Plan | \$3,100,000 | 100.8 | | | 3 | 2,3,6 | 3,4,5,7 | Watershed protection |
| TOTAL ACRES TO BE ACQUIRED | | | | | 6,346 | 1,384 | 1,540 | 3,422 | | | |
| TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS | | | | \$153,500,000 | | \$21,800,000 | \$47,000,000 | \$84,700,000 | | | |

* Priority 1 acquisitions are estimated costs. * Priority 2 and 3 acquisitions are level of effort costs averaging \$30,000 per acre (rounded up to the next \$100,000) due to uncertainty of beyond 5 and beyond 10 year costs.

APPENDIX 4 - PARK PROXIMITY AND PARK EQUITY ANALYSES

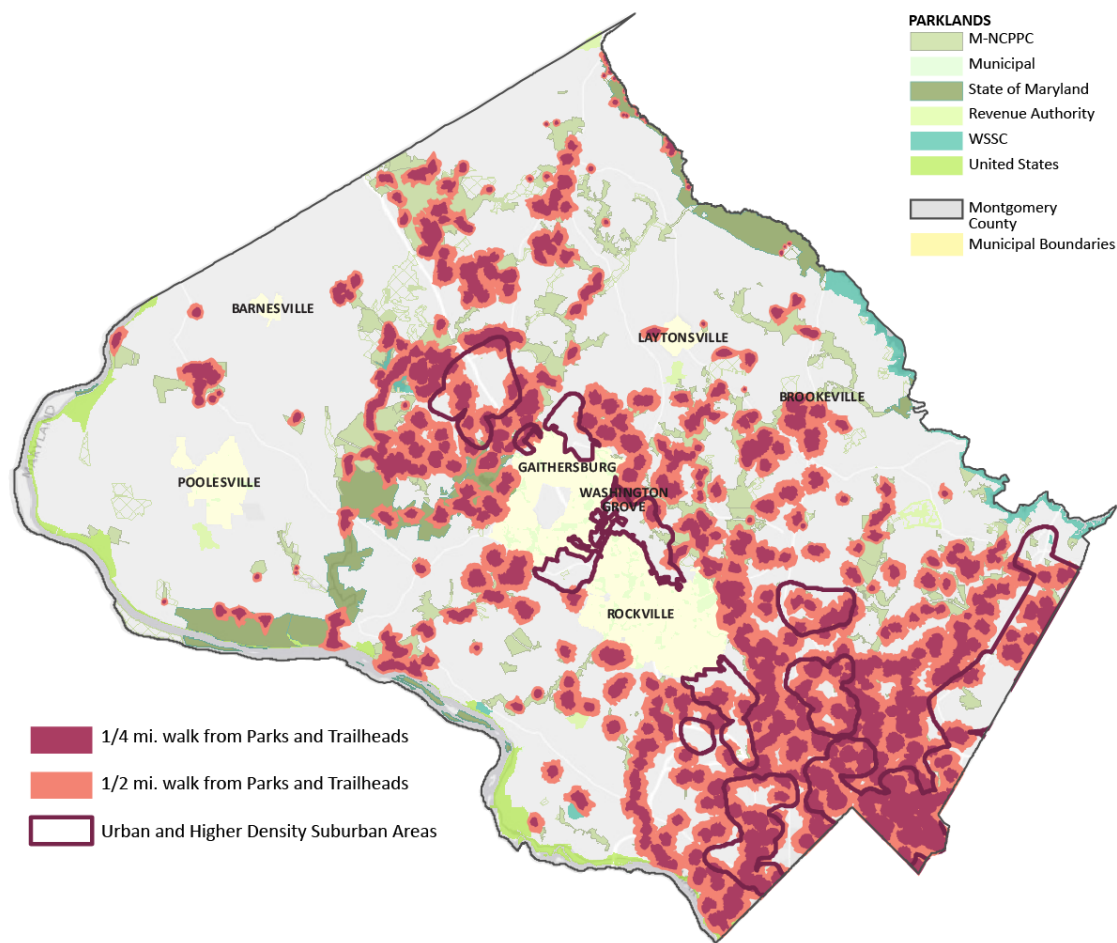
Walking Distance to Park Entrances and Trailheads

To create the Walking Distance to Park Entrances and Trailheads map (**Map 1**), first a walkable network of roads and trails was established. This network of walkable streets is defined as:

- Road classes that are residential and lower speeds (classes 4 and 5),
- All other road classes with sidewalks or an adjacent pedestrian path,
- All sanctioned natural-surface and hard-surface M-NCPPC Park Trails.

Next, using this walkable network and the point layer of Park and Trail Entrances, an analysis was performed in ArcGIS to calculate walk-sheds from these entrance points and reclassified to show walk-sheds at a variety of distances.

The Walking Distances to Park Entrances and Trailheads map shows a quarter-mile and a half-mile walk from entrances to existing M-NCPPC Parks and Trailheads. As the data on park entrances and trailheads evolves and new entrances or trailheads are added, the accuracy of this map will improve over time.



Map 1 - Walking Distance to Park Entrances and Trailheads map

Proximity to Playgrounds, Trailheads, and Natural Areas

The proximity analysis or service area maps measure proximity to three facility types: Playgrounds, Trailheads, and Natural Areas.

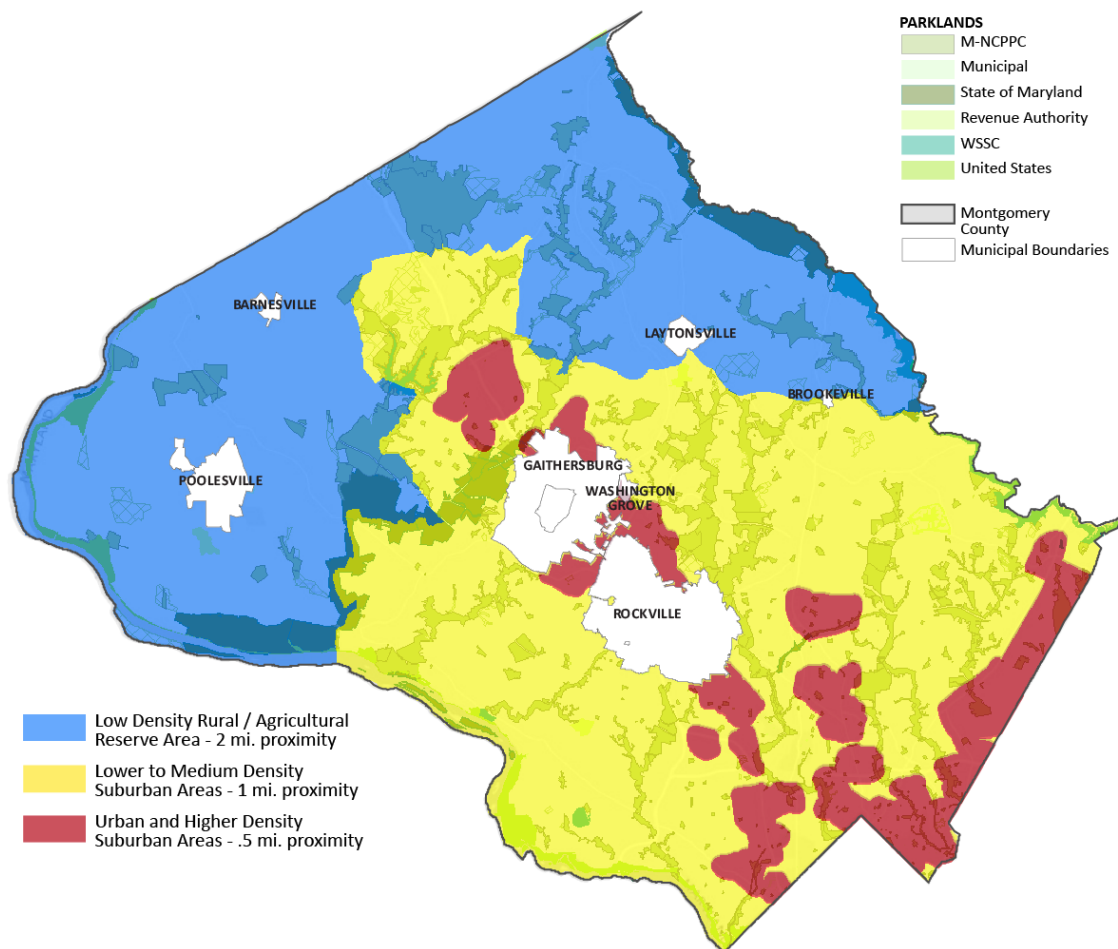
These facilities were ranked highly by the statistically valid survey performed as part of the *Vision2030 Strategic Plan* for Parks.

To account for the different land use and transportation patterns in the county (rural, suburban, and higher-density suburban/urban) proximity to these facilities was measured at different distances for each of these geographies. As opposed to measuring proximity at one distance across the whole county (for example, a half-mile from all playgrounds) this approach is instead intended to more accurately depict the typical, reasonable distance a park user would travel to reach that facility based on the type of areas they live - ***Map 2 - Three Geographies used for Proximity Analyses***

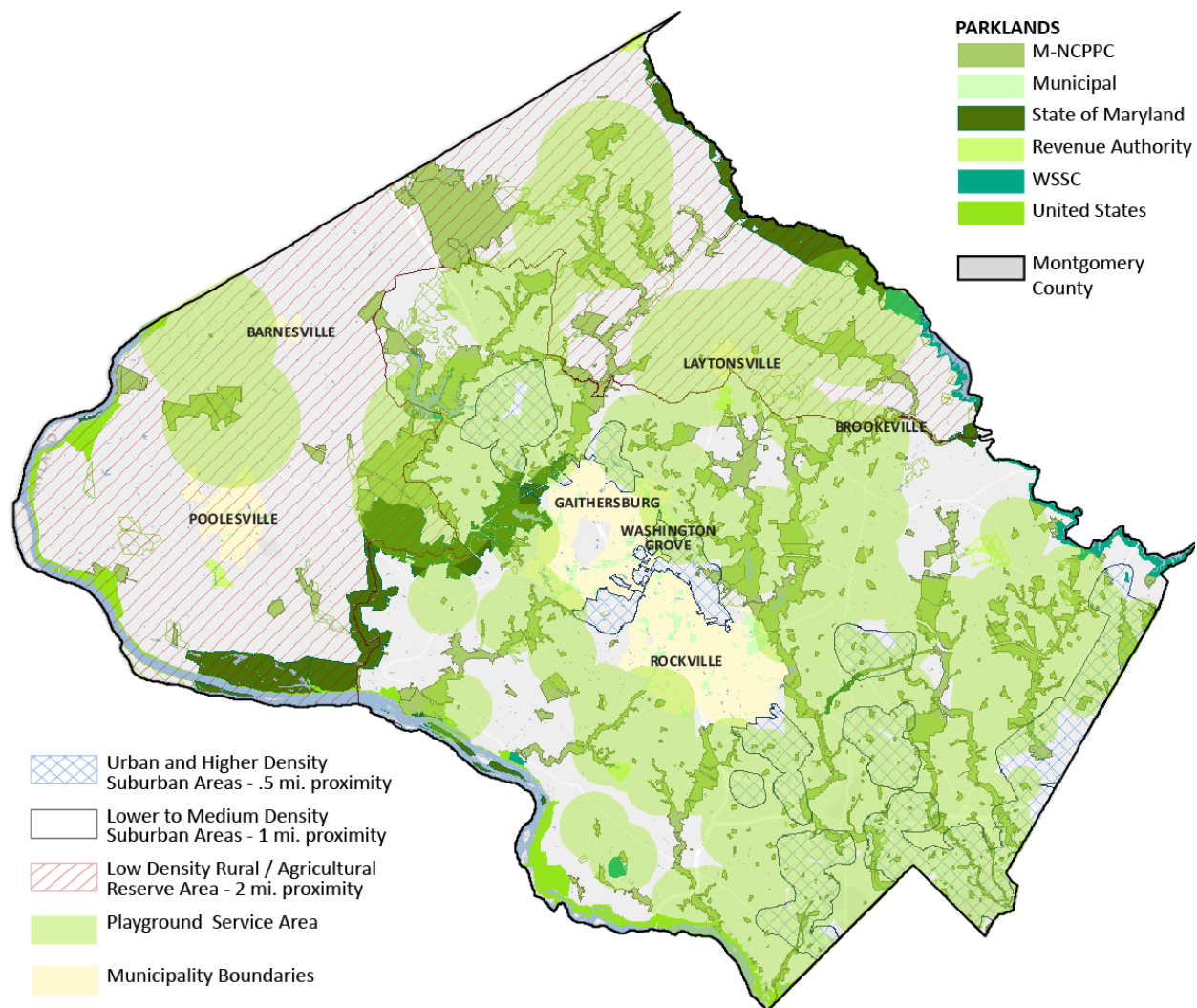
The following distances are used to measure proximity based on these three geographies:

- **Low Density Rural** (Agricultural Reserve Area): 2 miles
- **Lower to Medium Density Suburban Areas**: 1 mile
- **Higher Density Suburban / Urban Areas** (As calculated for the Energized Public Spaces Plan) : Half-mile

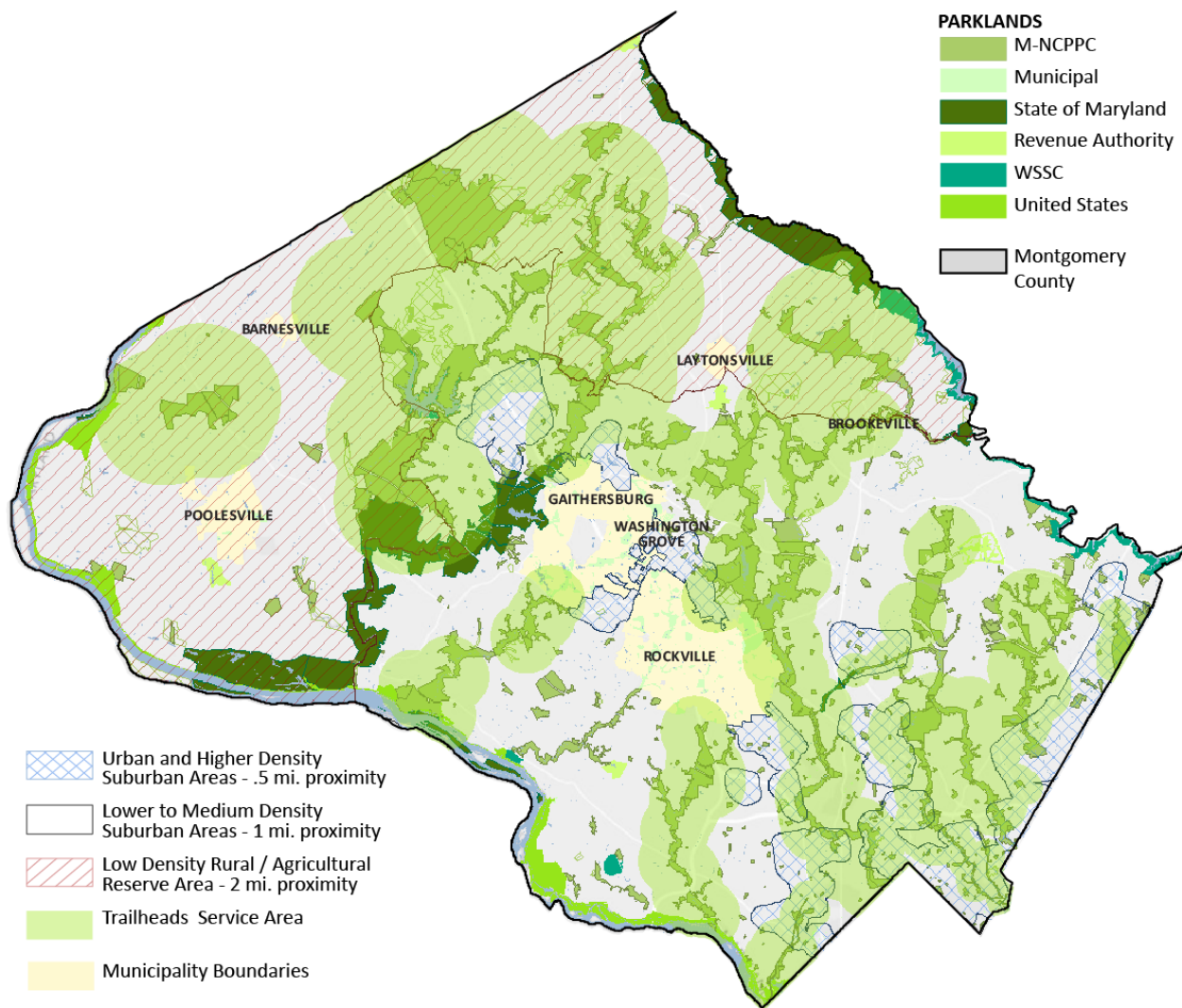
For each facility, the map shows the three different proximity distances combined into one service area. There are several other alternate providers of parkland in Montgomery County (State of Maryland, National Park Service, and local municipalities) and in many cases the gaps in service are filled by other providers; however, these maps only map M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks facilities.



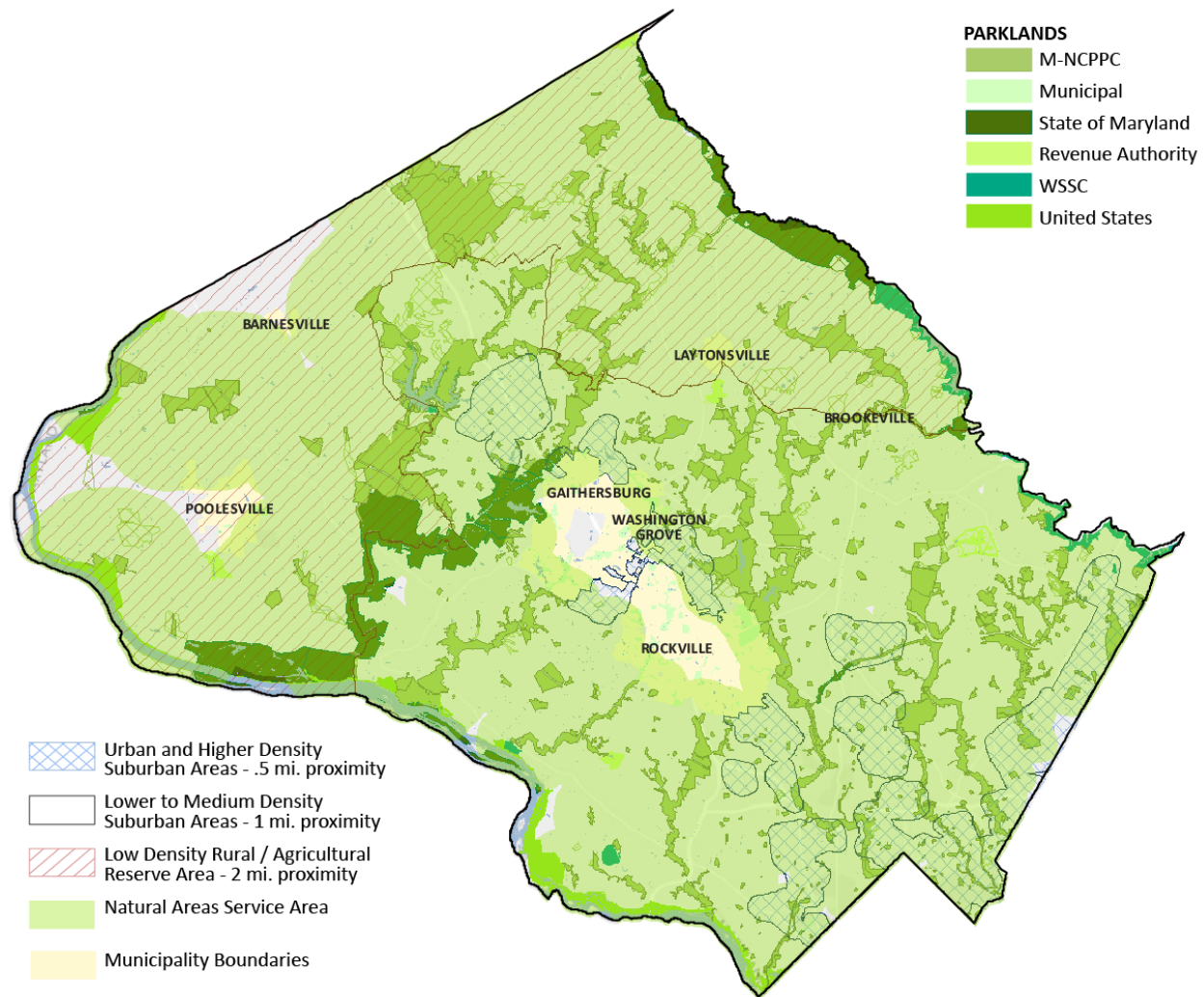
Map 2 - Three Geographies used for Proximity Analyses



Map 3 - Playground Proximity Map



Map 4- Trailheads Proximity Map



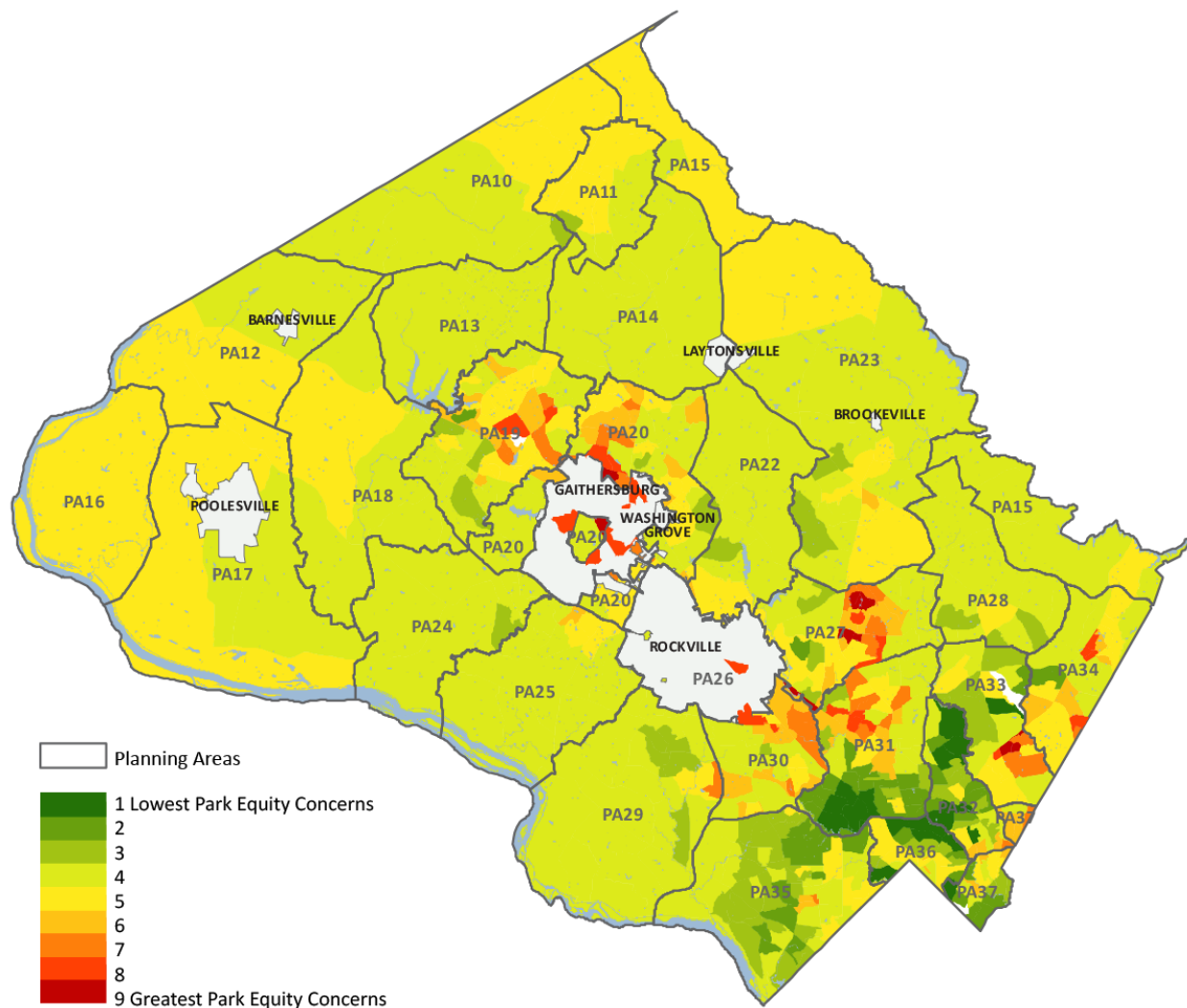
Map 5 - Natural Areas* Proximity Map

**Natural Area are defined as woodland and meadow areas on existing M-NCPPC Parkland.*

Park Equity: Mapping Population Density, Income, and Walkable Access to M-NCPPC Parks

The Park Equity Map was designed to identify high concentrations of lower income households with low walkable access to park entrances and trailheads. This map depicts an index of three factors: population density, Median Household Income as a percent of Area Median Income (AMI), and walkable access to parks and trailheads.

Data sets were mapped at the Census Block Group scale. The following tables show how data in each factor were scored. Each Census Block Group was scored according to these three factors and the individual scores were added together to create an overall score. All factors were weighted equally. Scores ranged from 0 – 9, with zero being the areas of least concern and nine being the areas of highest concern.



Map 6 - Park Equity Map of Walkable Access to Parks in Higher Density, Lower Income Areas*

**The Park Equity Map was designed to identify high concentrations of lower income households with low walkable access to park entrances and trailheads. This map depicts an index of three factors: Population Density, Median Household Income as a percent of Area Median Income, and Walkable Access to Parks and Trailheads.*

Population Density: by Census Block Group (People Per Square Mile)

| RANGE | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 10,001 + ppsm | Very High Density (Urban, for MoCo) | 3 |
| 5,001 – 10,000 ppsm | Medium-High Density (Suburban) | 2 |
| 1,001 – 5,000 ppsm | Medium-Low Density (Suburban) | 1 |
| < 1,000 ppsm | Low Density (Rural) | 0 |

Data source: US Census Bureau. Table B01003: Total Population. 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Universe: Total population.

Income: Percent of Area Median Income by Census Block Group (2016 AMI \$108,600):

| RANGE | | |
|------------------|-----------------|---|
| 0% – 50% AMI | Very Low Income | 3 |
| 51% – 64.6% AMI | Low Income | 2 |
| 64.7% – 100% AMI | Middle Income | 1 |
| 100% + AMI | Above AMI | 0 |

Data source: US Census Bureau. Table B19013: Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2015 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars), 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Universe: Households.

Chart: Park Access: Walking distance to Parks Entrances and Trailheads by Census Block Group

| RANGE | | |
|---|--|---|
| 0 – 25% of area of Census Block Group is within a 10-min walk | Poor access to parks/trailheads | 3 |
| 26 – 50% of area of Census Block Group is within a 10-min walk | Fair access to parks / trailheads | 2 |
| 50 – 75% of area of Census Block Group is within a 10-min walk | Good access to parks / trailheads | 1 |
| 76 – 100% of area of Census Block Group is within a 10-min walk | Very Good access to parks / trailheads | 0 |

Data source: M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks, Park and Trail Planning, Analysis of Walking Distance to Parks and Trailheads.

Recreational Facilities to the Year 2022 (DATA TO BE FINALIZED)

[illegible]

APPENDIX 6 - VISION 2030 PARKS AND RECREATION AMENITY ANALYSIS CHART

| FACILITY OR COMPONENT | *NRPA (per pop). | | | **Survey Results (2010) | | | Service Assessment | | TRENDS (NAT'L) | RECOMMENDATION (IN NEXT 5-10 YEARS) |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------|---|-------------------------|---|---|--|--------------|---|---|
| | ALL | COUNTY | MONTGOMERY COUNTY (2010) (PER POP). | IMPORTANCE | NEEDS BEING MET | SUB-AREA | NORTH | SOUTH | | |
| OUTDOOR AMENITIES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Basketball court (outdoor) | 7,333 | 16,333 | 4,951 (high LOS relative to NRPA study) | Lower (37%) | Mid (56%) | Ranked as low priority countywide | Complementary Development | Core Service | Declining participation (organized vs. pick-up) | Consider multiple uses of some courts (e.g., futsal, inline skating, etc.). |
| Diamond field | 3,913 | 9,467 | 5,232 (mid LOS) | Lower (27%) | Mid (49-50%) | Ranked as low priority countywide | Advance Market Position (Regional/Recreational Parks) Core Service (Community Use Parks) | | Baseball, softball - declining participation | Strategic potential to repurpose some existing diamond fields; a capacity/use study may be warranted |
| Community Gardens | NA | NA | 4 sites (over 200 plots total) = 241,975 | Mid (46%) | High (57%) | Higher demand in South and North Central | Advance Market Position | | Increasing demand (in MC) | Strategic potential to add (3 planned for spring 2011) |
| Dog Park | 59,256 | 242,500 | 193,580 (mid LOS) | Lower (33%) | Lower (43%) | Higher demand in South and North Central | Core Service | | Growing trend, especially in urban areas | Increase, focus on urban areas |
| Multi-Purpose Field, all sizes | 4,946 | 10,500 | 6,049 (mid LOS) | Mid (45%) | High (62%) | Higher demand in East Transit Corridor and South Central | Advance Market Position (Regional/Recreational Parks) Core Service (Community Use Parks) | | Soccer and lacrosse growing, football steady participation | Strategic potential to add (or increase functionality of existing) |
| Picnic Shelters | NA | NA | 20,994 | Higher (62%) | High (66%) | Higher demand in East Transit Corridor and South Central | Advance Market Position for Rentals - Shelters Core Service - Picnic Grounds | | Continue to be a common, popular park amenity; Ranked as 5 th top facilities to add or expand per Vision 2030 Survey | Maintain current LOS |
| Playground, all sizes | 4,000 | 16,400 | 3,752 (high LOS) | Higher (68%) | High (73%) | Higher demand in East Transit Corridor, South and North Central | Core Service | | Growing importance as healthy living amenity | Maintain high current LOS |
| Skate Park | NA | NA | 483,950 | Lowest (16%) | Lowest (39%) | Ranked as low priority countywide | NA None in this region | Core Service | Fewer participants, but high % increase in youth participation | Strategic potential to add |
| Tennis (outdoor) | 4,690 | 15,779 | 3,184 (high LOS) | Mid (48%) | High (63%) | Higher demand in Potomac/Rural | Complementary Development | | Steady participation since 2000 | Potential to decrease number of stand-alone courts and increase groupings of tennis courts |
| Trails | NA | NA | 3349 miles per person (hard and soft surface) | Highest (72-73%) | Highest (74% natural surface, 76% hard surface) | Higher demand for hard surface trails in East Transit Corridor; Higher demand for soft surface trail in Potomac / Rural | Core Service | | Popular amenity national-wide; exercise walking ranks as the top sport by total participation nationwide; hiking, biking, and running/jogging also rank in the top 12 | Expand distribution of multi-use trails with a focus on more densely populated areas, when feasible; increase trail connectivity |
| Volleyball (outdoor) | NA | NA | 40,413 (GreenPlay benchmark review shows lower LOS in MC) | NA | NA | NA | Core Service | | Casual/pick-up play exceeded organized play in grass and sand volleyball; Community input of user groups shows demand for multiple courts for tournament play | Look for opportunities to add sand volleyball, with a focus on co-locating two or more courts for tournament play (with lighting when feasible) |

| FACILITY OR COMPONENT | *NRPA (per pop). | | | **Survey Results (2010) | | | Service Assessment | | TRENDS (NAT'L) | RECOMMENDATION (IN NEXT 5-10 YEARS) |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| | ALL | COUNTY | MONTGOMERY COUNTY (2010) (PER POP). | IMPORTANCE | NEEDS BEING MET | SUB-AREA | NORTH | SOUTH | | |
| INDOOR FACILITIES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aquatic Center | 34,187 | 105,556 | 211,679 | Mid (59%) | Mid (60%) | Higher demand in North Central | Advance or Affirm Market Position at all sites | Swimming ranks as the 4 th sport by total participation nationwide; Vision 2030 survey identified indoor aquatics as one of the top five facilities to expand or improve | Incorporate indoor aquatics with recreation centers (do not build additional stand-alone aquatic centers) | |
| Nature Center | NA | NA | 241,975 | Mid (58%) | High (67%) | Higher demand in Potomac / Rural | Core Service - Drop-in Experience Other services vary within nature centers and are Advance, Affirm or are Complementary Development (e.g., Environmental Education Programs - On-Site, and Special Events) | 81% of Borough/Counties offer environmental education/nature programs per NRPA Operating Ratio Study*; Outdoor nature programs as 4 th top priority to add or expand in Vision 2030 Survey | No new stand-alone Nature Centers recommended; 78% of survey respondents prefer outdoor nature education over indoor | |
| Recreation Center | 25,000 | 36,554 | 35,280 | Higher (67%) | High (66%) | Higher demand in East Transit Corridor and North Central | Core Service - most Drop-in Experience. Other services vary within recreation centers | Larger, multi-purpose recreation centers with aquatics are a national trend; lap and leisure aquatics, larger gym and fitness spaces are common amenities; climbing walls and walking/jogging tracks are also trends | Add fewer, larger regional recreation centers (with aquatics) focused in along central corridor growth areas; (63% of survey respondents prefer to fewer, larger multi-purpose regional rec centers as opposed to a greater number of smaller centers) | |

Note: This is a draft chart and is subject to revisions upon further staff review. *National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Operating Ratio Study, 2009: "All" includes all jurisdiction respondent types (County/Borough, Municipal, and Special Districts) and "County" includes only the County jurisdiction respondents to this national benchmarking study. The numbers in columns 2-4 represent population per component. **Survey: Vision 2030 Strategic Plan Survey results are statistically-valid on a countywide basis; sub-area information is informational and not statistically-valid due to the smaller sample size.

APPENDIX 7 - TOTAL POPULATION PROJECTED BY PLANNING AREA

Forecast of Households, Population, and Employment by Planning Areas (Round 9.0)

| PLANNING AREA | PLANNING AREA # | POPULATION 2015 | POPULATION 2020 | POPULATION 2025 | POPULATION 2030 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| DOWNCOUNTY AREAS | | | | | |
| Aspen Hill | 27 | 63,700 | 63,700 | 63,700 | 64,000 |
| Bennett | 10 | 4,100 | 4,100 | 4,100 | 4,200 |
| Bethesda/Chevy Chase | 35 | 94,800 | 98,400 | 100,200 | 108,700 |
| Clarksburg | 13 | 22,700 | 23,700 | 34,400 | 36,400 |
| Cloverly | 28 | 18,200 | 18,200 | 18,200 | 18,500 |
| Damascus | 11 | 11,700 | 11,700 | 11,700 | 12,000 |
| Darnestown | 24 | 13,100 | 13,100 | 13,100 | 13,700 |
| Dickerson | 12 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 2,000 |
| Fairland | 34 | 42,700 | 42,700 | 42,700 | 46,600 |
| Gaithersburg City** | 21 | 68,500 | 69,800 | 72,400 | 75,500 |
| Gaithersburg Vicinity | 20 | 78,000 | 84,500 | 89,000 | 92,600 |
| Germantown | 19 | 87,900 | 93,200 | 93,200 | 93,500 |
| Goshen | 14 | 10,500 | 10,500 | 10,500 | 10,700 |
| Kemp Mill/4 Corners | 32 | 38,400 | 38,400 | 38,400 | 38,900 |
| Kensington/Wheaton | 31 | 93,300 | 95,500 | 96,500 | 98,500 |
| Lower Seneca | 18 | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,600 |
| Martinsburg | 16 | 400 | 400 | 1,300 | 700 |
| North Bethesda | 30 | 47,900 | 55,800 | 62,400 | 64,300 |
| Olney | 23 | 37,900 | 37,900 | 37,900 | 38,500 |
| Patuxent | 15 | 6,300 | 6,300 | 6,300 | 6,500 |
| Poolesville | 17 | 6,200 | 6,200 | 6,200 | 6,500 |
| Potomac | 29 | 46,400 | 47,000 | 47,000 | 48,100 |
| Rockville** | 26 | 65,400 | 69,800 | 75,100 | 78,600 |
| Silver Spring | 36 | 42,700 | 46,500 | 48,300 | 53,200 |
| Takoma Park | 37 | 33,100 | 33,100 | 33,100 | 33,500 |
| Travilah | 25 | 28,400 | 28,400 | 28,900 | 29,700 |
| Upper Rock Creek | 22 | 14,100 | 14,300 | 14,500 | 14,800 |
| White Oak | 33 | 36,200 | 36,300 | 36,300 | 37,000 |
| Total * | | 1,015,300 | 1,052,200 | 1,088,100 | 1,128,800 |

| RURAL AREAS | PLANNING | | | | |
|--------------|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | | |
| Bennett | 10 | 4,100 | 4,100 | 4,100 | 4,200 |
| Damascus | 11 | 11,700 | 11,700 | 11,700 | 12,000 |
| Goshen | 14 | 10,500 | 10,500 | 10,500 | 10,700 |
| Patuxent | 15 | 6,300 | 6,300 | 6,300 | 6,500 |
| Total | | 32,600 | 32,600 | 32,600 | 33,400 |
| | | | | | |
| Dickerson | 12 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 2,000 |
| Martinsburg | 16 | 400 | 400 | 1,300 | 700 |
| Poolesville | 17 | 6,200 | 6,200 | 6,200 | 6,500 |
| Lower Seneca | 18 | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,600 |
| Total | | 9,300 | 9,300 | 10,200 | 10,800 |

* Figures may not sum to total because of rounding.

** Municipality. Source: Research & Special Projects, Montgomery County Planning Department, MWCOG Draft Round 9.0 Cooperative Forecast.

APPENDIX 8 - NON M-NCPPC PARKS AND OPEN SPACE IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Federal, State, and Other Parkland and Open Space

Montgomery County also benefits from parkland and open space areas provided by other governmental and private entities. These are the Federal Government, the State of Maryland, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and private providers.

FEDERAL

Federal parkland in Montgomery County consists of the C&O Canal Historical Park, which provides 4,102 acres of parkland. The park includes 3.67 miles of the old towpath for hiking and biking, and opportunities for picnicking, fishing, and bird watching. In addition, a limited number of primitive campsites are located along the towpath. The major access point and the area of highest use in the C&O Canal Park is the Great Falls recreation area. In addition to a historic tavern, canal locks and towpath, there are sixteen miles of hiking and natural trails available in the Great Falls area. The Carderock area of the canal below Great Falls provides opportunities for rock climbing enthusiasts. Access to the C&O Canal above Great Falls occurs primarily at the old canal lock sites. There is a boat ramp and parking at the Pennyfield Lock site on M-NCPPC parkland, which provide boat access to the Potomac. Parking is also available at Violets and Swains Locks.

Other national park sites in Montgomery County include the Clara Barton National Historical Site and the Glen Echo Park, both located in the Glen Echo area of the County.

STATE OF MARYLAND

State parkland in Montgomery County is 12,292 acres. Approximately 5,866 of these acres are in the Seneca State Park, which extends from the Potomac River to Germantown. A significant portion of this park is developed with picnic, boating, and trail facilities. The area also contains the 90-acre Clopper Lake, an archery range, and provisions for horseback riding.

The second largest State holding is the undeveloped Patuxent State Park, at 3,135 acres, which lies along the Patuxent River on the Montgomery and Howard County boundary. This park, which primarily serves conservation purposes, also includes opportunities for hiking, fishing, and horseback riding. Future development of this park is in the planning stage.

The McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area encompasses 2,831 acres and is adjacent to the C&O Canal in the western portion of the County. This area is managed for wildlife and is significant because it is one of the few public sites available for hunting in the County. During the off-season, this area is also used for bird watching.

The Mathew Henson State Park consists of 104 acres from Viers Mill Road to Georgia Avenue. This linear Mid-county wildlife corridor provides passive and hiking recreation.

The Islands of the Potomac Wildlife Management Area (WMA) provides a collective 306 acres of protected wildlife habitat. The Diersen WMA contributes 50 acres.

OTHER

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)

The WSSC owns 2,074 acres of open space land and 2,192 acres of water supply in Montgomery County. The Triadelphia Watershed comprises 1132 acres with a reservoir containing 576 acres. The T. Howard Duckett Watershed contains 942 acres including a 259-acre reservoir. Black Hill Regional Park has a 1357-acre lake surrounded by Black Hill Regional Park. Although the primary purpose of the WSSC land is for water supply, recreational use of the land is permitted. The activities allowed include fishing, boating, picnicking, and horseback riding on an established trail system.

Other Large, Private Open Spaces

Private conservation-oriented groups in Montgomery County provide an important role in preserving open space purposes. The Izaak Walton League has 5 Chapters providing a total of 732 acres of protected open space; however, it is not available to the general public. Rockville has 50 acres protected, Bethesda/Chevy Chase Chapter 493 acres, Lois Green Chapter 63.5 acres protected, Wildlife Achievement Chapter 93 acres, and the Izaak Walton League national headquarters with 33 acres.

APPENDIX 9 - NATURAL RESOURCE MAPS AND GIS DATA LIST OF DELIVERABLES

The Guidelines for State & Local Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Planning require additional materials to be shared with the State Department of Planning including the following maps and data.

- Maps of Federal, State, and locally owned parkland, open space, greenway, or natural resource areas
- Parkland, natural areas, and open space protected by long-term lease or license agreement
- Forest conservation easements and reservations
- Floodplains, steep slopes, and wetlands preserved by legal and regulatory mechanisms, i.e., protected by easement
- Land protected by deed covenants such as homeowner association open space
- Land trust easements or ownership

Inventory Map

- Provide a GIS-based map of the parks and recreation lands and facilities included in the inventory spreadsheet and a brief narrative explaining it.

GIS datasets requested from counties for future statewide analysis:

- County protected public lands (county owned parks, natural areas and lands with agricultural or conservation easements)
- Public land and water trails in county parks and natural areas – preferably with any notes on use restrictions (ex. Hikers only, equestrian, mountain bike, etc.)
- Parking at county parks and trailheads
- Public hunting areas in county parks or natural areas (if applicable)
- County park amenities – such as picnic areas, campgrounds, playgrounds, recreation centers or sports fields
- Public fishing sites
- County water access locations (boat ramps and canoe/kayak launches)

APPENDIX 10 - GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS, TERMS AND ACRONYMS

The following terms are used in the *2017 Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan* document and in Park and Open Space planning in general.

A

Active-Use Areas: The sum total of acres of land developed for public use. These areas include managed trails, roads, nature centers, buildings, picnic areas, campgrounds, golf courses, ballfields, soccer fields, horticultural gardens, parking lots, lawns, boat docks, etc.

Acquisition: The act of fee-simple or easement purchase of land.

Agricultural Land: Land that is in active agriculture or pasture use within a county's agricultural zoning district. For some state programs, forestland with a forest management plan in place can be considered agricultural land. Land that is assessed for agricultural use and is not developed may also be considered agricultural land.

Agricultural Land Transfer Tax: A tax levied by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) when farmland is converted to a non-agricultural use (e.g., sold for development) and no longer qualifies for agricultural use assessment. This tax is not to be confused with the real estate transfer tax (definition below) which is levied on all property transfers.

Agricultural Use Assessment: The State Department of Assessments and Taxation's (SDAT) assessment on property that is actively devoted to farm or agricultural use.

Advanced Land Acquisition Revolving Fund (ALARF): A M-NCPPC bond-funded acquisition program to purchase lands for highway, schools, libraries, parks, recreation centers, government buildings and other public uses in advance of their need. Projects must be included in an adopted master plan and acquisitions must be approved by the County Council.

Afforestation: The creation, on a tract that is not presently in forest cover, of a biological community dominated by trees and other woody plants, at a density of at least 100 trees per acre with at least 50 of the trees and other woody plants having the capability of growing to a diameter (measured 4.5 feet above the ground) of 2 inches or more within seven years.

Agricultural Reserve: Areas of Montgomery County planned and zoned for agricultural uses, which include the majority of the County's remaining working farms and certain other non-farm land uses.

Allowed Use: An activity that is permitted on a property through a deed, zoning regulation, or terms of easement.

Amenity: Privately provided facilities within a development that enhance public enjoyment. Amenities can include physical enhancements to public and private spaces, which make those spaces more inviting to the general public.

B

Best Management Practice (BMP): A practice or combination of practices that is determined to be the most effective, practicable (including technological, economical and institutional considerations) means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by non-point sources to a level compatible with water quality goals.

Bikeway: Any road, path or way that is signed and/or marked for bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are exclusive or shared (see *Shared Use Path, Bicycle Lane, Signed Shared Roadway, or Cycle Track*).

Bicycle Lane (Bike Lane): A portion of a roadway which has been designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Consists of a 4 ft. to 6 ft. lane in each direction, with traffic flow. Previously called a Class II Bikeway.

Biodiversity Area: These areas are designated by the Maryland Natural Heritage Program in the document titled *Inventory for Rare Plants and Significant Habitats on M-NCPPC Parklands in Montgomery County*. They contain rare threatened, endangered or watch list species; unusual or unique habitat; high quality or otherwise significant natural communities; or plant or animal species with importance to the County or locality. These areas appear in many of the proposed trail corridors. Special care must be taken when planning, designing and constructing trails in these areas.

Block Grant: Money distributed by an organization, which does not need to be paid back, and the use of which is largely at the discretion of the recipient. A consolidated grant of federal funds, formerly allocated for specific programs, that a state or local government may use at its discretion for such programs as education or urban development.

Boulevard: A divided roadway with a wide median and a formal streetscape of regularly spaced trees on both sides, as well as the median (see *Urban Boulevard*).

Buffer: Land that is set aside through zoning, subdivision regulations, or easement to protect land or water resources from the effects of adjacent development. A buffer can be placed around agricultural land or a water, natural resource, historic, or cultural feature among other things.

Buffering: Isolation or separation of different land uses by a third land use, by open space, or by a physical separator such as a wall, vegetation or open space. Low density offices and townhouses are frequently used as buffers to separate commercial and detached residential areas.

C

Capital Improvements Program (CIP): A six-year comprehensive statement of the objectives of capital programs with cost estimates and proposed construction schedules for specific projects. The CIP is submitted annually to the County Council by the Executive. The CIP is the tool through which locally funded public facilities, such as sewers, local roads, storm drains, schools, libraries, parks, etc., can be scheduled and built, in coordination with, and guided by, the Annual Growth Policy and area Master Plans. It is used in conjunction with the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance in terms of programming for public facilities needed to serve subdivisions.

Central Business District (CBD): Any one of the County's principal business districts that has been so designated in section 59-C-6.12 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance. There are four designated in the County: Bethesda, Friendship Heights, Silver Spring, and Wheaton.

Cluster Development: An optional development technique under zoning and subdivision regulations that allows residential dwellings to be placed on smaller than usual lots that have been grouped or clustered in order to leave some land undivided and available as common area or open space.

Commemorative Naming Opportunity: The process of naming or Dedication of Park Assets to recognize an individual without regard to any financial contribution.

Community Master Plans: Long range plans that include recommendations for land use, transportation and public facilities among other topics for a specific area.

Community Partner: An organization with a scope broader than a specific Park Asset but with an overlapping mission and common objectives.

Concept Plan: A generalized idea or set of ideas that forms the basis for a master, facility or development plan.

Conservation: The continuing protection and management of natural resources.

Conservation Areas: The sum total of acres of land that are managed to maintain select, viable, native populations of plant and animal species. These areas include the following managed habitats: pond, deep marsh, shallow marsh, scrub swamp, forested swamp, meadow, oldfield, coniferous forest, mixed forest, and deciduous forest. Conservation areas may also be designated within a contour approximating the normal spillway elevation of man-made lakes provided that these areas are managed for the benefit of both wildlife and people.

Conservation Easement: A restriction placed on the land and the natural features of the land usually shown on the record plat of subdivision or recorded by a metes and bounds description. Its terms and conditions are recorded in the County's land records. Most commonly, the agreement prohibits removal of healthy, mature trees and shrubs, and prohibits changes to the scenic character of land without written permission from M-NCPPC's Planning Department.

Concessionaire: A for-profit entity allowed through a legal agreement to use existing infrastructure on park property to conduct operations usually in alignment with the Parks mission.

Creek: A small stream that serves as the natural drainage course for a drainage basin of small size.

Cultural Resource: A site or location of local, state, or national cultural significance.

Cycle Track: A bicycle facility that is physically separated from vehicular and pedestrian infrastructure to facilitate higher speed bicycle travel. Separation may be vertical (curb), horizontal (landscaped panel, parking lane, bollards), or a combination of the two. Cycle tracks are typically installed on roads where high-volume and/or high-speed traffic is likely to deter some cyclists from using bicycle lanes and shared roadways, or where shared-use paths are not appropriate.

D

Dedication: Donation of land to a public agency for parkland, school sites, road and transit rights-of-way, etc., in connection with the development of a subdivision or lot.

Development: Changes in land forms and biota caused and managed by construction activity which alter their function and/or appearance. **Development District:** A special district in which government may levy special assessments or taxes on real property to help pay for infrastructure improvements for that district.

Development Plan Review: Some zones require approval of a development plan at the time of rezoning. The development plan shows the layout, unit mix, uses, building densities, circulation, parking and open space configuration. When a development plan is required, the subsequent site plan must be in conformance with it. The preparation of an acceptable development plan helps to assure that the intent of the master plan is achieved.

DNR: The Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Donor: An individual or organization that makes a purely charitable contribution in support of Parks with no benefits expected in exchange.

Drainage Area: The size of a drainage basin or watershed, usually expressed in acres or square miles. Also called a watershed, catchments area or river basin.

E

Easement: A contractual agreement to gain temporary or permanent use of, and/or access through, a property, usually for public facilities and access ways.

Encroachment: Unauthorized uses occurring within parkland generally by an adjacent property owner.

Environmental Evaluation: An analysis of physical and biological characteristics of a park to determine areas which should be preserved and areas capable of supporting development.

Environmental Mitigation: A series of actions, ranging from avoidance to replacement, intended to ameliorate the negative impacts of development on the environment.

F

Fall Line: A line joining the waterfalls on a number of rivers and streams. This line marks the boundary between the upland Piedmont Plateau and the lowland Atlantic Coastal Plain.

Facility: For the recreation portion of this Plan, a building, apparatus, or site feature used for a specific recreational purpose.

Facility-based Recreation: Any leisure activity dependent on a built facility, such as a court, an athletic field, or a trail. In contrast with natural resource-based recreation these can generally be provided anywhere, assuming the availability of space, environmental suitability, and funds for development.

Fee-simple: Full ownership of, or absolute title to, a piece of property that is free from easement or other ownership claims against the title. and compatibility with the natural environment and surrounding land uses. Includes mineral, ground and air rights.

Floodplain: A relatively flat or lowland area adjoining a river, stream pond, stormwater management structure, or watercourse subject to periodic, partial or complete inundation; or an area subject to unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface water as a result of an upstream dam failure.

Friends Group: A legal entity formed by the community and sanctioned by the Parks to support the development, maintenance and programmatic needs of a specified Park Asset, managed through a formal MOU and an annual work program.

Forest: A biological community dominated by trees and other wood plants covering a land area of 10,000 square feet or greater and at least 50 feet wide. Includes: 1) areas that have at least 100 trees per acre with at least 50 percent of those trees having a 2-inch or greater diameter at 4.5 feet above the ground; and 2) forest areas that have been cut but not cleared. Forest does not include orchards.

Forestland: A parcel or tract of land on which the predominant vegetation is forest and trees that can be used for forest-related projects or recreation.

Forest Conservation Plan: A plan approved under Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Code that outlines the strategies and specific plans proposed for retaining, protecting and reforesting or afforesting areas on a site pursuant to the 1991 Maryland Forest Conservation Act.

Formal Trail: A trail that is designated, signed, and maintained. Also known as a sanctioned trail.

Functional Master Plan: A document addressing a system such as circulation or environment, or policy such as agricultural preservation or public facilities that covers a large part of the county or applies countywide. A functional plan amends the General Plan but does not make land use or zoning recommendations.

G

General Plan: The Countywide comprehensive plan entitled "On Wedges and Corridors," adopted in 1964, and updated in 1969 and 1993. It provides the overall framework for the County's future. Each master plan, sector plan, and functional plan adopted since 1969 amends the General Plan. Located online here: http://montgomeryplanning.org/community/general_plans/general_plans.shtm.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS): The integration of data with computerized maps enabling the generation of high quality maps based on the analysis of underlying layers of geographic information. GIS allows all information in the database to be integrated for any location covered by the database.

Grant: Funding received from a recognized grant-making entity to support a program or service with specific deliverables and reporting requirements and a finite timeframe.

Green Corridors: Roadways that are extensively landscaped along their sides and in their medians.

Green Infrastructure: A network of waterways, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats and other natural areas that supports native species and contributes to clean air, clean water and a healthy, sustainable quality of life. (From: http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/green_infrastructure/index.shtm)

Greenway: A corridor of undeveloped land or open space, as along a river/stream or between urban centers that is reserved for recreational use and/or environmental conservation." / A corridor of undeveloped land, as along a river or between urban centers that is reserved for recreational use or environmental preservation. May or may not include a trail. (From greenways.com and slightly modified)

Group Picnic Area: Separate picnic area reserved by large groups and generally includes a shelter and sometimes play equipment and/or ballfield.

Guidelines: Guidelines are a set of limits and objectives, less binding than regulations, used to guide development or plan proposals.

H

Hard Surface Trail: Any firm and stable trail surface capable of supporting most on-road or hybrid bicycles as well as wheelchairs and rollerblades. May include concrete, asphalt, crushed stone, packed gravel or other hard surface and bridges or boardwalk where necessary.

Hiker-Biker Trail: A paved trail used for both walking and bicycling. A hard surface park trail intended primarily for recreational walking and bicycling.

Hiking Trail: Unpaved trail generally through wooded parkland and natural areas that is primarily intended for foot travel .

Historic Preservation: The identification, designation and regulation--for purposes of protection, preservation and continued use and enhancement--of those sites, structures with their appurtenances and environmental settings, and districts that are of historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural value. In Montgomery County, historic preservation activities are directed by the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code.

Historic Resource: A structure, site, or location of local, state, or national historical significance.

Homeowners Association (HOA): When development occurs under the cluster provisions of the subdivision regulations, a homeowners' association is frequently required to assure the maintenance and operation of private open space, recreational facilities private streets or other common space in the

subdivision. The homeowners association generally levies a fee in the form of a property assessment to maintain these facilities. It also must provide a management structure to supervise orderly maintenance.

I - J

Informal Trail: An unsanctioned trail that is not signed or maintained
Interpretive Facilities: Nature Centers and other facilities used to teach the public about the natural environment.

Impervious Surface: Any surface that prevents or significantly impedes the infiltration of water into the underlying soil, including any structure, building, patio, sidewalk, compacted gravel, pavement, asphalt, concrete, stone, brick, tile, swimming pool, or artificial turf. Impervious surface also includes any area used by or for motor vehicles or heavy commercial equipment, regardless of surface type or material, including any road, driveway, or parking area.

ISTEA: The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. The federal transportation law passed which includes provisions for 'transportation enhancements' such as trail and bike facilities. The federal transportation law has changed names many times over the years (TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU) and is now called "MAP-21"

Joint-use Agreement : An agreement between two entities to share the use of a facility. For the recreation portion of this plan, such an agreement is between a county and its board of education.

L

Lake: An inland body of water created by a natural or artificial impoundment, which is normally too deep in the middle for the growth of rooted aquatic vegetation.

Land Conservation: The purchase of land or easements on land to conserve its agricultural, cultural, historic, or natural resource characteristics.

Land Trust: A non-profit organization formed for the express purpose of holding land (or restrictive easements on land) for its conservation, historic preservation, wildlife protection, and/or recreation values, among other things. According to State law, a land trust is a qualified conservation organization that (1) is a qualified organization under § 170 (h) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and regulations adopted under § 170 (h) (3); and (2) has executed a cooperative agreement with the Maryland Environmental Trust.

Lease: Written agreement that conveys real estate, equipment, or facilities for a specified term and for a specified rent.

Local Governing Body: According to the Project Open Space (POS) law, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the governing body of any county or Baltimore City.

Local Projects: According to the POS Law, acquisition or development of projects sponsored by local governing bodies or their units, and in the case of Baltimore City it also means operation and maintenance of projects as described in POS Law.

LWCF: Land and Water Conservation Fund

M

Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): State agency responsible for protecting, restoring and enhancing the land, water and living resources in the State of Maryland.

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC): A bi-county agency created by the General assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority extends to the great

majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties: The Regional District (M-NCPPC planning jurisdiction) comprises 1,001 square miles, while the Metropolitan District (parks) comprises 919 square miles, in the two counties. The Commission has three major functions: (1) the preparation, adoption and occasional amendment or extension of the General Plan for the physical development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District; (2) the acquisition, development, operation and maintenance of a public park system; (3) in Prince George's County only, the operation of the County public recreation program.

Master or Sector Plan: A document that guides land use, zoning, infrastructure and park acquisition for a specific area and the way an area should be developed. In Montgomery County, these plans amend the County's General Plan and provide more detailed recommendations for a local area (see also [Community Master Plans](#)).

Master Plan for Historic Preservation: A document listing properties protected by the County's Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code. Listed properties have been approved for designation by the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Board, the County Executive and the County Council. Any proposals for exterior alteration, new construction, subdivision or demolition of these properties must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.

MET: Maryland Environmental Trust

MDP: Maryland Department of Planning

N

Natural Area: The sum total of acres of land not developed for public use, and encompassing those natural resources being preserved to maintain a diversity of native natural communities as a legacy for future generations. Within these communities, natural processes and desirable ecological changes should be allowed to take place. Management activities should be limited to those necessary to mitigate the influence of humans as well as non-native and undesirable species (e.g. gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar*).

Natural Heritage Protection Area: An area defined by the Maryland Natural Heritage Program as containing rare, threatened and endangered plant species, unusual or unique habitat types, or examples of significant or high quality natural communities.

Natural Resource Area: An area where natural processes predominate and are not significantly influenced by either deliberate manipulation or accidental interference by man. Such an area may also have unique scenic, geological, cultural, or ecological value, or a combination of such values.

Natural Resource-based Recreation: Any leisure activity conducted outdoors that is dependent on a particular element or combination of elements in the natural environment. These elements cannot be easily duplicated by human effort. In contrast, facility-based recreation can generally be provided anywhere, assuming the availability of space and funds for development and compatibility with natural systems and surrounding land uses.

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI): A complete analysis of existing forest, natural features and tree cover on a site. The natural resources inventory must cover the development site and first 100 feet of adjoining land around the perimeter or the width of adjoining lots, whichever is less. Natural features include topography, steep slopes, perennial and intermittent streams, major drainage courses, 100 year floodplain, wetlands, soils and geologic conditions, critical habits, aerial extent of forest and tree cover, and necessary buffers. The inventory also includes cultural features and historic sites.

Natural Surface Trail: Typically a two to four foot wide unpaved trail. May also include wood chips or stones. Generally involves no major tree cutting but may involve water bars, stairs, boardwalk, or erosion control measures where necessary.

Non-Tidal Wetland: An area inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater that normally supports vegetation typically adapted for saturated soil conditions (hydrophytic vegetation). If the Maryland Department of Natural Resources designates a non-tidal wetland, desirable ecological changes should be allowed to occur and management activities should be limited to those necessary to mitigate the influence of humans and undesirable species (e.g., gypsy moth and others).

O

Open Space: Land that is permanently set aside for general public use as a result of zoning and subdivision regulations or owned by homeowner associations for use of residents in a sub-division from which a portion of the parcel was left undeveloped, that has reasonable public access. Areas usually intended for recreational, agricultural, preservation or scenic purposes.

P

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR): An easement purchase where funds are paid to the landowner to extinguish the right to develop the property and other rights are left intact.

Park: A tract of land or water that provides for public leisure activities and/or the protection of natural resources.

Park Acquisition (Park-Take) Lines: Proposed boundaries for park acquisition and inclusion in the County park system. Areas considered for stream valley parks generally include floodplains, steep slopes and sites of environmental sensitivity.

Partner: An entity allowed through development and lease agreements to develop parkland and operate a business on park property for the purposes of offering programs or services that are aligned with the Parks mission. In particular, any services or programs Parks is unable to offer due to a lack of resources.

Perennial Stream: A stream which has base flow all year.

Philanthropic Naming Opportunity: The naming or dedication of a specified Park Asset in exchange for a charitable contribution to the Parks Foundation.

Pond: An inland body of water, smaller than a lake. Typically, it is shallow enough for rooted aquatic vegetation to grow, even in its deepest areas.

POS: Program Open Space

Preservation: Protection of specific resources.

Preserved Land: Land that has been acquired through fee-simple or easement purchase to protect its agricultural, cultural, historic, or natural resource characteristics

Private Conservation Organization: A land trust or other non-governmental group that purchases land or easements for land conservation.

Program Open Space (POS): A state funding program that acquires recreation and open space areas for public use. The program administers funds made available to local communities for open and recreational space through the State real estate transfer tax and from federal programs, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The Program coordinates the acquisition of lands for the use of all units of DNR. POS funds are split between State and local government. Stateside POS Funds are allocated to purchase land for state

parks, forests, wildlife habitat, natural, scenic and cultural resources for public use. A portion of stateside funds are also dedicated to capital improvements, critical maintenance, and operations in state parks. Local-side POS makes funds available to local government to help them buy land and build park facilities that will help them meet their specific goals of Land Conservation and Recreation for their citizens. (From: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/land/landconservation.asp>).

Public Right-of-Way: Property owned by the public and occupied or intended to be occupied for use as a public roadway, bikeway, shoulder, sidewalk, transit way, or for utility pipes, transmission lines or public open space amenity. Typically, public right-of-way is separate and distance from a privately owned lot or parcel.

Public Use Space: Space sometimes required by the sector plan or other space devoted to uses for public enjoyment such as gardens, malls, plazas or walks. This space doesn't include areas for parking or maneuvering vehicles. The CBD and CR zones require development projects to provide increase public use space in return for density.

R

Recreation Activities: Leisure activities that are voluntarily pursued for personal satisfaction and enjoyment.

Reforestation: The re-creation of a biological community dominated by trees and other wood plants including plant communities, the understory and the forest floor which is at least 10,000 square feet in area or 50 feet wide, and containing at least 100 live trees per acre, with at least 50 percent of the tree having the potential of attaining a 2 inch or greater diameter measured at 4.5 feet above the ground within 7 years.

Resource Management: Restoration and/or maintenance of the environment.

Right-of-Way: A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by a road, bikeway, sidewalk/path, transitway, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission line, oil or gas pipeline, water main, sanitary or storm sewer main or for other special use. To be shown on a record plat as separate and distance from the adjoining lots or parcels and not included within their dimensions. Rights-of-way maintained by a public agency shall be dedicated to public use on the plat.

RLA: Rural Legacy Area Define "Rural Legacy Area" here or as a separate term / A Rural Legacy Area (RLA) is a region designated by the Rural Legacy Board as rich in a multiple of agricultural, natural, forestry or cultural resources. (From <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/land/rurallegacy/terminology.asp>)

Rural Density Transfer Zone (RDT): The zone applied to the Agricultural Reserve. Development is limited to one house per 25 acres, with the provision that such development can be grouped on lots of 40,000 square feet (approximately one acre). The property in the Agricultural Reserve is designated as a "sending area" that maintains development rights at one dwelling unit per five acres, and can be sold and transferred to designated receiving areas (see *Receiving Areas* and *Sending Areas*).

Rural Open Space: Areas abutting suburban development where the critical mass of farms has already been eroded by subdivision activity. The preservation of farmland in an appropriate combination with low density residential development is the objective.

Rustic Roads: A road that is located in an area where natural, agricultural, or historic features are predominant, and where master planned land use goals and zoning are compatible with a rural/rustic character; is narrow and intended for predominantly local use; is low volume with traffic that does not detract significantly from the road's rustic character; and has outstanding natural features along its borders, such as native vegetation, tree stands, and stream valleys.

Scenic Easement: A contractual agreement to gain permanent preservation of the visual character of a piece of property.

Schematic Development Plan: A development plan for Planning Board review and County Council approval submitted as part of an application for the rezoning of land into floating zones at the option of the applicant. Such schematic development plans limit development to that specified in the application.

SDAT: State Department of Assessments and Taxation. Maryland State agency that administers and enforces the property assessment and property tax laws of Maryland. (From: http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/general_info.html).

Sensitive Areas: Are defined as streams and their buffers, 100-year floodplains, habitats of threatened and endangered species, and steep slopes as well as other areas that a jurisdiction (i.e., the Montgomery County Planning Board) may elect to protect. [Codified at 3.05(a)(1)(viii), Article 66B, Annotated Code of Maryland.] (Maryland Office of Planning and Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 1993).

Shared Use Path: An 8' to 10' wide asphalt or concrete path that is separated from motorized traffic either by barrier or a minimum five-foot landscape panel. These facilities may be located within a roadway right-of-way and parallel the road (Great Seneca Highway) or within an independent right-of-way (North Bethesda Trail). They are intended to be used by pedestrians, bicyclists, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers and other non-motorized users. Previously called a Class I Bikeway.

Shoulder: This is the smooth paved surface adjacent to the roadway's travel lane.

Shoreline: Ocean, bay, river, and stream frontage.

Signed Shared Roadway: A roadway designated (signed and/or marked) for bicycle travel where bicyclists share travel space with motor vehicles. .

Site: A piece of property.

Site Plan: A detailed plan, required in certain zones, that usually shows proposed development on a site in relation to immediately adjacent areas. It indicates roads, walks, parking areas, buildings, landscaping, open space, recreation facilities, lighting, etc. The Planning Board approves the site plan after preliminary subdivision plan approval and before building permits can be issued.

SmartParks: An Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) System, which manages the many demands on staff time and resources including work orders, assets management, and inventory control. Specifically: Asset Management of playgrounds, ball fields, Tennis courts, picnic shelters, trails, natural areas, etc. Work Order Management for preventive maintenance and on-demand requests. Inventory of Equipment (including HVAC, electrical, and alarm systems) and Event Project Tracking like snow, hurricanes, earthquakes.

Specimen Tree: A tree that is particularly impressive or unusual example of a species due to its size, shape, age or any other trait that epitomizes the character of the species.

Sponsor: An entity that provides cash or in-kind resources in support of Parks programs or services in exchange for recognition benefits and exposure to Parks users.

Steep Slope: A slope in which the percent slope equals or exceeds 25 percent, or 15 percent when the associated soils are considered highly erodible by the USDA Soil Conservation Service Highly Erodible Land Report for Montgomery County.

Storm Runoff: That portion of the total runoff that reaches the point of measurement within a relatively short period of time after the occurrence of precipitation.

Stormwater Management (SWM): The application of various techniques for mitigating the adverse effects of stormwater runoff.

Stream Valley Buffer: A strip of land contiguous with and parallel to the bank of a perennial or intermittent stream, which acts to: (1) protect hydraulically adjacent slope areas; (2) maintain or improve the water temperature regimen/water quality of the stream(s); (3) protect natural wetlands; (4) provide groundwater storage/recharge for a stream; (5) complement regulations pertaining to the 100-year ultimate floodplain; (6) provide wildlife habitat, open space, or both; (7) complement on-site erosion/sediment control measures by serving as a filter trap.

Streetscape: The environment of the public right-of-way as defined by adjacent private and public buildings, character of the pavement and street furniture, and the use of the right-of-way.

Subdivision: (1) The division of a lot, tract or parcel of land into two or more lots, plots, sites, tracts, parcels or other divisions for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of sale or building development.
(2) The recombination of lots previously created into a new configuration.

T

Tenant: An entity allowed through a lease to use existing infrastructure on park property to conduct operations not necessarily aligned with the Parks mission.

Trailhead: An area that marks the beginning and/or end of a trail and includes such facilities as parking, trail maps, signs, bulletin boards, water, restrooms, etc.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): In general, a program whereby a landowner can sell development rights on his or her land to another landowner. In turn, the purchaser of the development rights can increase the density of development on his or her property.

U - V

Urban Boulevard: The major street or streets in a CBD, with well-defined streetscape consisting of wide sidewalks, a distinct type of street tree and wide, clearly marked pedestrian crossings.

Urban District: A County special purpose tax area for an urban location. Urban districts are established in Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton.

Urban Street: Central Business District streets that accommodate a mix of users and are enhanced with streetscape elements.

Vendor: An entity allowed through a legal agreement to sell merchandise or other products on park property at a specified location for a finite timeframe, not necessarily aligned with the Parks mission.

Volunteer: An individual, group of individuals, or organization providing one-time or regular episodic support for specific park projects through the donation of time and effort.

W

Watershed: The area contained within a topographic divide above a specified point on a stream; the area that drains into that stream; all lying within a sub-basin defined in water quality regulations adopted by the Maryland Department of the Environment under Maryland State Code (COMAR) 26.08.02.08 (see [Drainage Area](#)).

Wetland: An area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support under normal circumstances a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation.

Wildlife Management Area: An area whose primary objective is to protect, propagate, and manage wildlife populations. It may provide recreational opportunities for sportsmen and other wildlife enthusiasts or may provide an undisturbed refuge for wildlife.

APPENDIX 11 - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT DRAFT REPORT - APRIL 2017



ABSTRACT

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
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CHAPTER ONE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) contracted PROS Consulting, in collaboration with Montgomery Parks, Communities Connect Consulting, ETC Institute, and Peak Democracy, to complete a Needs Assessment for Montgomery County, Maryland. The Needs Assessment is the focus of the initial phase of the 2017 Montgomery County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan Update.

The overarching goal of the Community Needs Assessment is to solicit comprehensive feedback from residents of the community. The process engaged a broad range of demographic segments present within Montgomery County to better understand the characteristics, preferences, and satisfaction levels of residents in relation to parks and recreation activities. Once a thorough understanding of residents served is established, a variety of data sources and best practice standards is applied to quantify and prioritize community needs for parks and recreation services and amenities in Montgomery County.

This Needs Assessment consists of six (6) community input methods and an analysis of priorities and highlights the major findings and recurring themes. Ultimately, these key findings and themes lay the framework of the needs, interests, and preferences of residents served by Montgomery County Parks. These key findings are then aggregated into Priority Rankings.

1.2 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

ETC Institute administered a statistically valid needs assessment survey for Montgomery County. This survey was mailed to a random sample of households within Montgomery County. A total of 705 households completed the survey.



Overall, 20% of those surveyed indicated that English was not their primary language. A total of 21 different languages were represented in the survey, with Spanish and Mandarin being the two highest non-English languages noted amongst respondents. The overall results indicated that 95% of respondents communicated that high-quality parks, trails, recreation facilities and services are either Very Important (82%) or Somewhat Important (13%) to the quality of life in Montgomery County.



KEY STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Communities Connect Consulting conducted an extensive public engagement outreach effort, focused on minority communities. Over a period of four (4) weeks, six (6) focus groups consisting of 61 total participants were conducted with an experienced facilitator, a native language interpreter, and a research analyst to record notes.

These focus groups were open to individuals who live in the selected specific minority population areas. The group was evenly distributed in terms of race/ethnicity, with 30% African American, African, or Black; 33% Hispanic and/or Latino; and 37% Asian or Pacific Islander. Participants resided in 16 different zip codes, and ranged from recent arrivals to residents living in the U.S. between 5-10 years. Of participants, 58% were female and 42% were male. Throughout the process, all ideas from the public were carefully documented, and used to summarize the development of the outreach plan to the minority communities. The following are key themes from focus group results:

- Improve park security and safety - increase lighting; improve traffic crossings; add cameras
- Cleanliness of facilities - clean up litter on trails and remove trash; cleaner restrooms
- Programming - programs for families/small children; culturally relevant programs and sports



Montgomery Parks

- Physical facilities - for small children in walking distance; large outdoor event amenities
- Engage communities - parks as gathering spaces; engage partners
- Accessibility - language barriers in signage; prohibitive cost; service to elderly and families

INTERCEPT SURVEY #1 – USAGE, INTEREST, AND MARKETING PREFERENCES



The PROS Consulting team collected survey information from residents and system users via intercept survey method. The purpose of these surveys was to help develop a better understanding of the needs, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Montgomery County residents in relation to parks, natural resources, and recreation activities. Surveys were collected at community recreation centers, local grocery stores, churches, and parks.

To help ensure collection from a representative cross-section of County residents, Mandarin, Spanish, and Hindi interpreters were also present assisting the PROS Team throughout this process. A total of 174 responses were collected throughout this method. Respondents' language of preference included: 49% English, 10% Spanish, 25% Mandarin, and 16% Hindi.

Key themes of open-ended question responses include:

- **Positive feedback** - almost 30% of the feedback was a positive and satisfied comment
- **Maintenance** - outdoor fields, landscaping, sidewalks/paths; indoor hot water, signage, steps
- **Additional amenities** - water fountains, waste bags, restrooms, indoor gym, greenspace
- **Hours** - additional operating hours for both facilities and specific programs (ping-pong)
- **Communication** - outreach for updates, programs, and events; outreach in Chinese community
- **Accessibility, cleanliness, & security** - better access, facility cleanliness, better security

INTERCEPT SURVEY #2 – PRIORITIZATION OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Montgomery County Parks staff conducted a second complementary survey (Intercept Survey #2). The primary focus of Intercept Survey #2 was system users. Respondents were asked to rank the following facilities/ services, provided by Montgomery County Parks, in order of most to least important (Sports, Trails, Nature, History, Events, Special Places, and Gathering Places).

Surveys were conducted at two community events in the fall of 2016; where a total of 534 responses were collected. The most important facilities and services in the community include:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| 1. Trails | 4. Nature |
| 2. Events | 5. History |
| 3. Sports | 6. Special Places |

Key themes of open-ended questions include:

- **More** - playgrounds, picnic areas, shade, bathrooms, water amenities, programs, information
- **Cleanliness & safety** - litter issue, need for trash cans and recycling bins, addition of lights
- **Transportation & access** - bicycle access, public transportation, parking, wheelchair access
- **Appreciation** - about 25% of the feedback was a positive and satisfied comment

INTERACTIVE FORUM FOR USAGE & NEEDS

Montgomery County Parks also created an internet forum in order to obtain additional community input. The purpose of this internet forum was to reach additional community members that they were not able to reach during the intercept surveys, and the forum was accessible through the Montgomery County Parks website.



Respondents were prompted with two overarching topics: park needs and park usage. Approximately 300 participants left their thoughts, opinions, concerns pertaining to these topics on the message board.

Key themes of park needs and usage included:

- **Amenities** - signage, a dog park, programs, parkland developed into parks, picnic tables, swings
- **Access** - positive comments on traffic solutions, bicycle access, safer pedestrian access
- **Positive Feedback** - approximately 50% of the feedback was a positive or satisfied comment.
- **Connections**- connections to other parks preservation of urban green and open space
- **Urban Parks** - converting current open space to an “energized park,” or an “urban park”
- **Security** - additional lighting (Rock Creek Park)
- **Art/History** - interest in art history behind the area, art student use, historic education
- **Wildlife** - leave pockets of trees as habitat for wildlife, joy of seeing wildlife
- **Maintenance** - better landscape maintenance, cleaner restrooms, flooding issues

PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE FUTURE SURVEY

Peak Democracy conducted an online survey focusing on the future of parks and recreation in Montgomery County. A key objective of this survey was to obtain feedback from as many geographic planning areas within Montgomery County as possible. To help ensure this, individual respondents’ zip codes were obtained during the survey process.



In doing so, the Planning Team is able to identify what regions specific feedback came from and can better understand the needs and preferences within each planning area of the county. As of March 30, 2017- 10:30am EST, a total of 714 surveys had been completed; with responses from 25 of the 28 total Planning Areas.

Of those surveyed, 71%-80% gave a positive rating of either excellent or good, for Parks, Facilities, and Services; while only 12%-17% consider their needs to be fairly or poorly met.

PRIORITY RANKINGS

PROS Consulting uses a weighted scoring system to formulate the Priority Ranking. The purpose of the Facility Priority Rankings is to provide a prioritized list of facility/amenity needs for the community served by the Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Department. This rankings model evaluated both quantitative and qualitative data.



Quantitative data includes the statistically valid community survey, which asked residents to list unmet needs and rank their importance. Qualitative data includes resident feedback obtained via community input, such as through the intercept surveys and focus groups, as well as demographics and trends. The weighted scoring system considers the following:

- **Community Survey- 60 %** (30% unmet needs, plus 30% importance rankings)
- **Consultant Evaluation- 40%** (consultant’s evaluation of qualitative community input)



These weighted scores were then summed to provide an overall score and priority ranking for the system as a whole. The results of the priority ranking were tabulated into three categories: High Priority (top third), Medium Priority (middle third) and Low Priority (bottom third).

The combined total of the weighted scores for Community Unmet Needs, Community Importance, and Consultant Evaluation is the total score based on which the Facility/Amenity Priority is determined. The top five priorities based on this evaluation system are:

1. Paved multi-use trails (walking, biking)
2. Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horseback riding)
3. Natural areas & wildlife habitats
4. Public gardens
5. Park shelters & picnic areas

1.3 MAJOR THEMES FROM OUTREACH AND ANALYSIS

PLAN GUIDANCE

While analyzing the results from the community input collection process, Montgomery County Parks staff used best practice to guide recommendations as they emerged from the data.

NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), has as its core mission to impact communities through three pillars of Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity (<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/>). These overarching themes are important in guiding the priorities of Montgomery Parks and the Recreation Department.

GUIDANCE FROM PREVIOUS PLANS

Several plans and policies have guided the formation of the 2017 PROS Plan including the Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation (Vision 2030), completed in June 2011, and the 2012 PROS Plan. Building on these plans, the 2017 PROS Plan includes updated service delivery strategies for several priority facilities and resources. The strategies will guide the Department of Parks and the Recreation Department in locating the right park and recreation facilities in the right places, and to ultimately help ensure that the parks and recreation system continues to play a major role in shaping Montgomery County's high quality of life.

MAJOR THEMES FROM OUTREACH AND ANALYSIS

Overall, Montgomery County residents report a high degree of satisfaction with the parks and recreation facilities and programs, which are considered by 82% of respondents of the statistically valid survey (2017 PROS Survey) to be important to the quality of life in the County. Seventy percent of respondents are satisfied with the overall value their household receives from the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department. One out of four respondents (25%) indicated they are very proud of M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks recreation facilities, parks, and services, and 42% indicated they are proud.

Three major themes emerged from the extensive outreach and analysis for guiding the park and recreation facilities and services for Montgomery County into the future:

- **Optimize what we have** - utilize existing park and recreation facilities and lands more fully
- **Build community through parks** - provide spaces and programs that bring people together
- **Plan for future generations** - increase land for natural resource protection and conservation

OPTIMIZE WHAT WE HAVE

In a County where developable or re-developable land is scarce and expensive, it is more important now than ever to make sure existing developed and undeveloped lands and facilities are utilized to their maximum potential, and if not, to renovate and repurpose them to best meet needs.

This theme was strongly expressed by respondents of the statistically valid survey as well as participants in other outreach venues. Repairing and renovating of existing park facilities was considered a funding priority by 49% of the survey respondents, followed by purchasing land for natural resource protection and conservation for future generations (45%). This theme was a major recommendation in Vision2030 from 2011 as well. The Department of Parks has responded over the past six years in several ways.

Recommendations include to adjust and to continue to:

- **Assess** underutilized areas and facilities that could be repurposed with facilities for which there are identified needs
- **Balance** funding for renovation and repair with acquisition and development of new lands and facilities
- **Program** parks and facilities to attract more users

Key themes for tactics from the Community Needs Assessment supporting this strategic priority include:

ENHANCE CLEANLINESS, SECURITY, & ACCESSIBILITY

- Enhance cleanliness of parks, especially restrooms
- Maintenance of existing facilities, including repair or renovation
- Added security, including lights or staff/personnel
- Accessibility by public transportation, pedestrian-friendly traffic elements, and connectivity to sidewalks, trails
- Emphasis on multi-use trails

PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES FOR SMALL CHILDREN

- Organized activities for small children and families
- Playgrounds and accessible outdoor play amenities for children

BUILD COMMUNITY THROUGH PARKS

In order to build communities, there first must be an understanding of who makes up our communities. Serving the residents of the County has always been a goal of Montgomery Parks and the Recreation Department. One of the values of Montgomery Parks is to “support and embrace cultural differences and offer suitable programs, activities, and services.” The mission of the Recreation Department is to “provide high quality, diverse, and accessible programs, services, and facilities that enhance the quality of life for all ages, cultures, and abilities.”

Using refined tools to improve our delivery of facilities and services equitably to all communities in the County has been a focus of the *2017 PROS Plan*. With better methods for outreach, the outreach listening sessions and survey results were tailored according to areas of minority populations. With improved geospatial analysis methods, the results of the outreach were correlated with population data on a finer level. This allowed recommendations to reflect the reported needs of traditionally underrepresented populations such as individuals with disabilities and foreign-born residents.

Recommendations include:

- Add park equity to the criteria for prioritization of the Capital Improvements Program to promote equitable access to parks for all
- Include facilities that serve all ages and abilities in service delivery strategies



Montgomery Parks

- Recognize the importance of social gathering - Recommend additional social gathering spaces in our areas of highest population densities and in our destination parks

Key themes for tactics from the Community Needs Assessment supporting this strategic priority include:

CREATE CULTURALLY-RELEVANT PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Program offerings that relate to diverse demographics of the area
- Historic and cultural events that demonstrate and relate history of the amenity or area
- Large-scale festivals and music events

DIVERSE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND NATIVE LANGUAGE OUTREACH

- Use of email blasts, consistent website updates, and social media outreach, the preferred communication methods as noted in the intercept surveys
- Outreach to diverse communities through native language and in partnership with culturally-focused organizations
- Proactive outreach and communication with underserved communities

GATHERING SPACES

- Emphasis on benches and picnic shelters as a place for people to meet and groups to gather
- Large picnic shelters for long-term rentals (1/2 day or longer) and bathroom facilities nearby
- Flexible adjacent lawn areas for large gatherings and pick-up sports

PLAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Montgomery County has historically emphasized the need to manage land toward natural resources protection and conservation, and the community has historically been supportive and encouraging of such efforts. The *2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* shows this historic emphasis. The recent community outreach as part of the Community Needs Assessment has shown that this ethic or preservation of these resource for future generations is still evident, even with the changing demographics. Recommendations include:

- Development of program and service amenities that balance activity with the natural environment, such as nature playgrounds
- Connecting current open spaces together using sustainable trails, and use of interpretive signs to show natural open space as a critical piece of the parks system
- Land preservation and acquisition strategies based on the development of natural, cultural, or light adventure amenities balanced with land strategies for traditional sports, such as sport fields and courts

Key themes for tactics from the *Community Needs Assessment* supporting this strategic priority include:

PRIORITY RANKINGS

Priority rankings identified using the quantitative and qualitative input from all of the community needs input methods included:

- An emphasis on natural trails, natural space and wildlife habitat, and gardens, indicating that the community values the opportunity to preserve enjoy these amenities
- Nature Parks over traditional sports parks

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NATURE RECREATION

- Contemplative and active educational and adventure elements

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- Connections to natural trails and other natural/cultural amenities, including dog parks and playgrounds
- Preservation of current open space, greenspace and existing urban parks



CHAPTER TWO - INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS

During the development of the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan* in 2010, the Department of Parks and the Montgomery County Recreation Department pledged to “engage a diverse community and proactively respond to changing demographics, needs, and trends”. Accordingly, for the *2017 PROS Plan*, a great deal of input was collected through a variety of methods including the Parks and Recreation of the Future campaign and surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted by a team of consultants.

Several Montgomery County demographic trends shaped the outreach methods for the *2017 PROS Plan*, including:

- Increasing racial and ethnic diversity, with a projected growth in minority groups from 55 percent of the population in 2015 to 68 percent of the population in 2040
- Projected growth in the population people over age 65 from 12 percent of the population in 2010 to 20 percent in 2040
- A large and widely diverse foreign-born population speaking a multitude of languages and having varying English speaking proficiencies

2.1 PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE FUTURE OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

Montgomery Parks launched a multi-pronged outreach strategy in November 2016 to engage diverse communities for input about the future of parks and recreation named *Parks and Recreation of the Future* (http://www.montgomeryparks.org/projects/public-input/#peak_democracy), was aimed at soliciting public input to inform three separate but related park programs: the *2017 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan*, the *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan*, and the *Capital Improvement Program*.

The outreach efforts targeted a vast array of audiences including, but not limited to ethnically diverse communities, senior populations, and people with disabilities. A variety of channels and tactics were leveraged to reach these audiences including:

TRADITIONAL OUTREACH METHODS

- Public and community meeting presentations to regional and citizen advisory boards
- Email outreach to elected officials, Homeowner and Civic Associations
- Posters and flyers distributed at frequented locations such as recreation centers, park facilities and libraries

MEDIA OUTREACH

- A segment on WRC-TV News Channel 4 (NBC affiliate for the DC market)
- Interviews on County Cable TV programs Que Pasa and County Report This Week, and Radio program Montgomery Al Dia, and WHAG
- Outreach to regional and ethnic outlets including TV affiliates, Washington Post, Bethesda Beat, Olney Greater News, Germantown Pulse, MYMCMedia, WTOP, WAMU, El Pregonero, Univision

MEDIA ADVERTISING

- El Tiempo Latino
- Radio One
- Radio America
- The Beacon

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING & OUTREACH

- Facebook and Twitter posts

- Facebook advertising

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- A new online open town hall platform (Peak Democracy) for people to easily submit their comments, suggestions and respond to a survey.
- Face-to-Face Outreach: via a listening tour in which parks staff presented the details of the campaign among various organizations and groups such as the Office of Community Partnership Advisory Boards
- Commission on the People with Disabilities
- Age-Friendly Montgomery Advisory Group

INTERCEPT SURVEYS

Targeting diverse audiences conducted at community locations such as:

- Grocery stores
- Faith organizations
- Recreation centers
- Community events

FOCUS GROUPS

Targeting minority communities, specifically:

- The Latino community
- The African community
- The Asian and Asian-Pacific communities

2.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT BY CONSULTANTS

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) contracted PROS Consulting, in collaboration with Montgomery Parks, Communities Connect Consulting, ETC Institute, and Peak Democracy, to complete a Needs Assessment to solicit comprehensive feedback from residents of the community. The process engaged a broad range of demographic segments present within Montgomery County to better understand the characteristics, preferences, and satisfaction levels of residents in relation to parks and recreation activities.

Once a thorough understanding of residents served was established, a variety of data sources and best practice standards was applied to quantify and prioritize community needs for parks and recreation services and amenities in Montgomery County. This Needs Assessment consisted of six (6) community input methods and a cumulative analysis of priorities which sorted the major findings and recurring themes. Ultimately, these key findings and themes laid the framework of the needs, interests, and preferences of residents served by Montgomery County Parks. These key findings were then aggregated into Priority Rankings of community needs.

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

ETC Institute administered a statistically valid needs assessment survey for Montgomery County. This survey was mailed to a random sample of households within Montgomery County. A total of 705 households completing the survey. Overall, 20% of those surveyed indicated that English was not their primary language. A total of 21 different languages were represented in the survey, with Spanish and Mandarin being the two highest non-English languages noted amongst respondents.



The overall results indicated that 95% of respondents communicated that high-quality parks, trails, recreation facilities and services are either very important (82%) or Somewhat Important (13%) to the quality of life in Montgomery County.

KEY STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Communities Connect Consulting conducted an extensive public engagement outreach effort, focused on minority communities. Over a period of four (4) weeks, six (6) focus groups consisting of 61 total participants were conducted with an experienced facilitator, a native language interpreter, and a research analyst to record notes. These focus groups were open to individuals who live in the selected specific minority population areas.

The group was evenly distributed in terms of race/ethnicity, with 30% African American, African, or Black; 33% Hispanic and/or Latino; and 37% Asian or Pacific Islander. Participants resided in 16 different zip codes, and ranged from recent arrivals to residents living in the U.S. between 5-10 years. Of participants, 58% were female and 42% were male. Throughout the process, all ideas from the public were carefully documented, and used to summarize the development of the outreach plan to the minority communities.

INTERCEPT SURVEYS

The PROS Consulting team collected survey information from residents and system users via intercept survey method. The purpose of these surveys was to help develop a better understanding of the needs, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Montgomery County residents in relation to parks, natural resources, and recreation activities. Surveys were collected at community recreation centers, local grocery stores, churches, and parks. To help ensure collection from a representative cross-section of County residents, Mandarin, Spanish, and Hindi interpreters we also present assisting the PROS Team throughout this process. A total of 174 responses were collected throughout this method. Respondents' language of preference included: 49% English, 10% Spanish, 25% Mandarin, and 16% Hindi.

CHAPTER THREE - STATISTICALLY VALID COMMUNITY SURVEY

3.1 OVERVIEW

ETC Institute administered a statistically valid needs assessment survey for Montgomery County during the winter of 2016-17. The survey was administered as part of the County's efforts to establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services. The results of this survey will assist the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery Parks, and the Montgomery County Recreation department in taking a resident-drive approach to making decisions that will enrich the future of parks and recreation services in the County, and affect the lives of its residents.

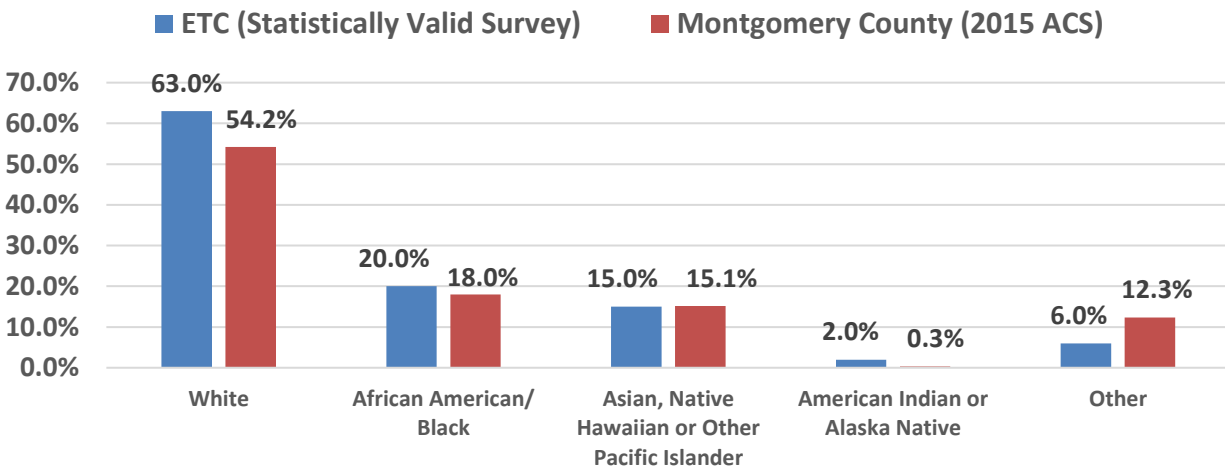
3.2 METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in Montgomery County. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it on-line at bit.do/montgomeryparks2017. Once the surveys were mailed, resident households who received the survey were contacted by phone. Those who indicated that they had not returned the survey by mail were given the option of completing it by phone. The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 700 residents. The goal was accomplished with a total of 705 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 705 households have a precision of at least $\pm 3.7\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.

A reported 20% of respondents to the survey did not speak English as their primary language. Spanish and Chinese were the 2-non-english language that were most represented. People who speak 21 different languages participated in the survey.

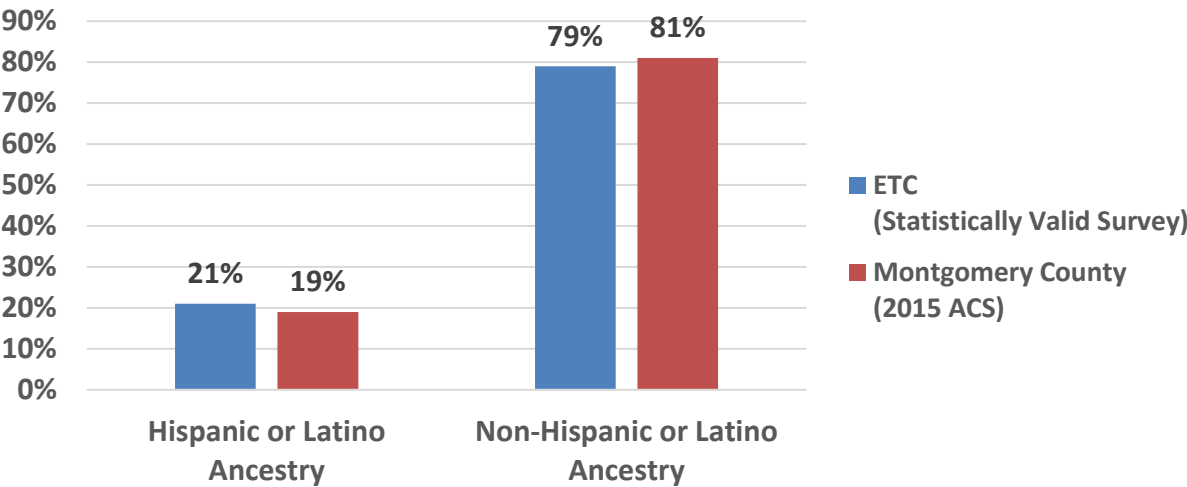
The demographic comparison below and on the following page compares the survey respondents' demographics to those of the County.

Demographics by Race

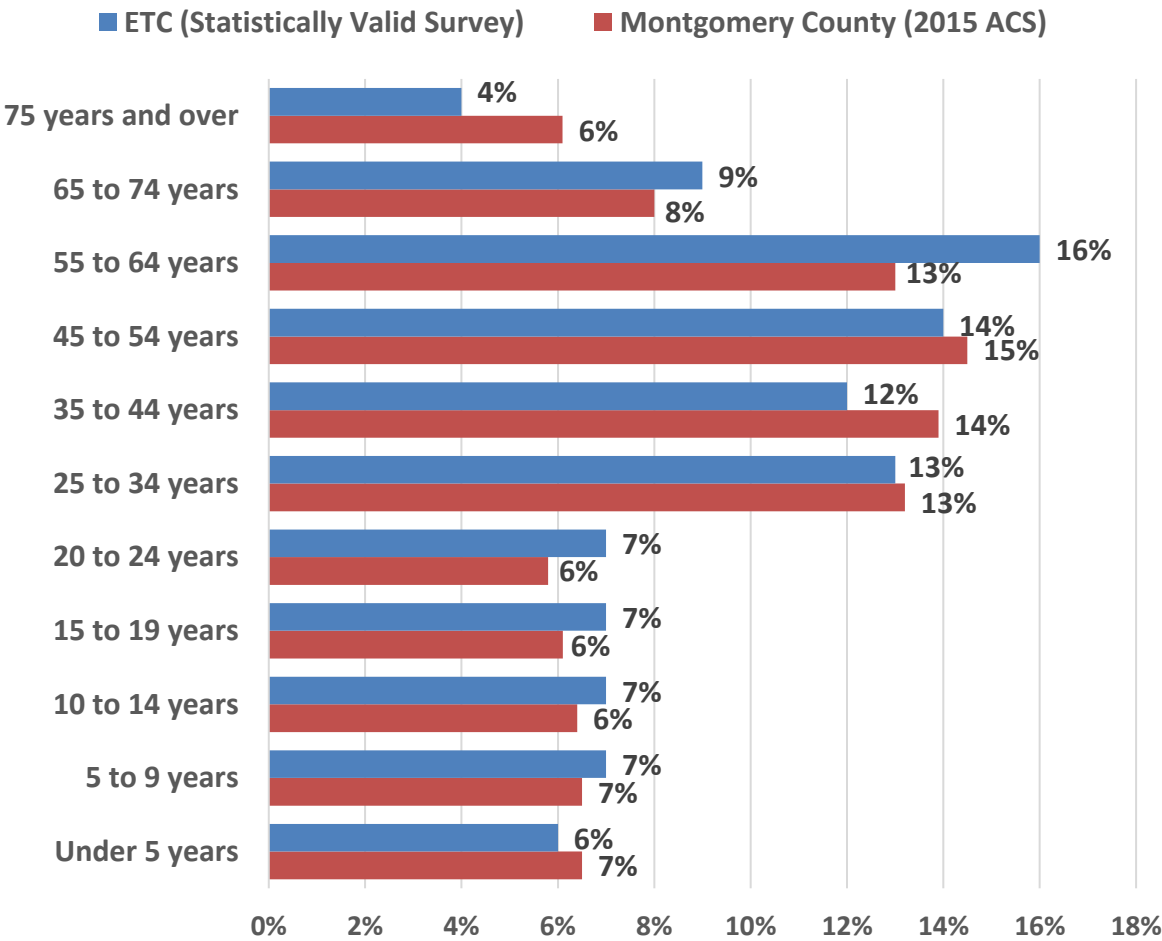




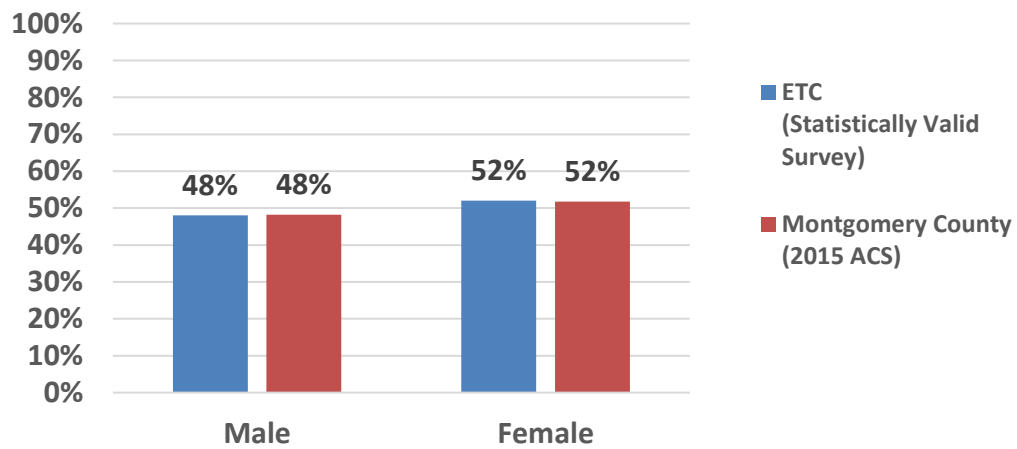
Demographics by Hispanic Origin



Demographics by Segment



Demographics by Gender





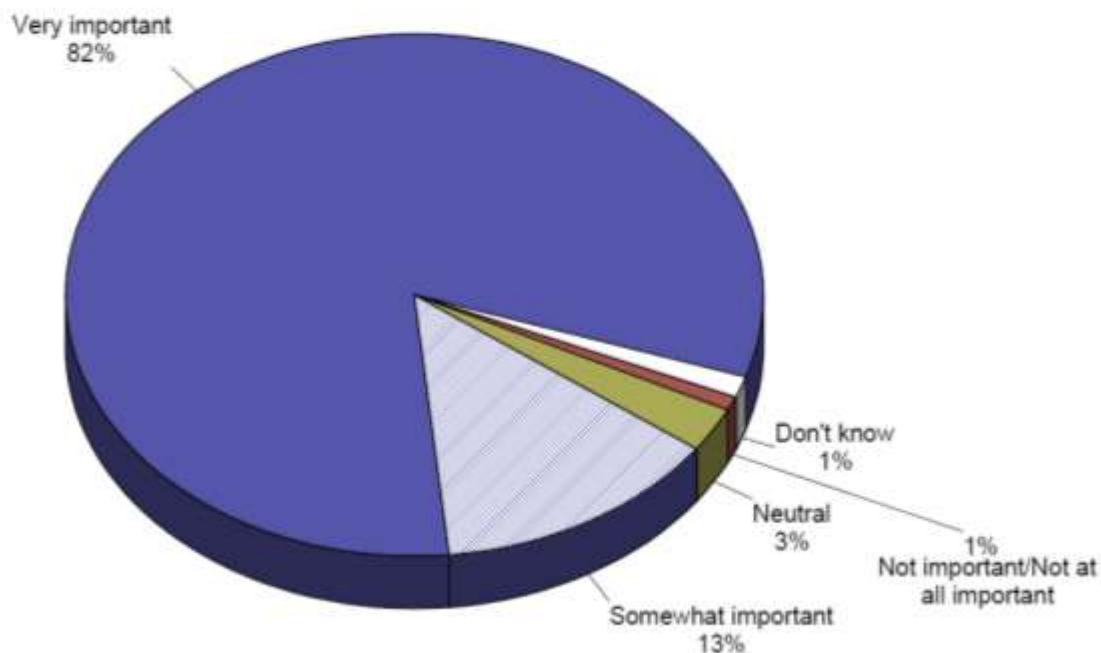
3.3 SURVEY RESULTS

OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents indicated that high quality parks, trails, recreation facilities, and services are very important to the quality of life in Montgomery County, 13% think they are somewhat important, 3% are neutral, and only 1% think they are not important or not at all important. When asked to rate the physical condition of all the parks, trails, and recreation facilities operated by M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department that respondents have visited during the past year, 21% indicated they were excellent, 55% indicated they were good, 16% fair, 1% poor, and 6% indicated they have not visited any M-NCPPC parks, trails, or recreation facilities during the past year.

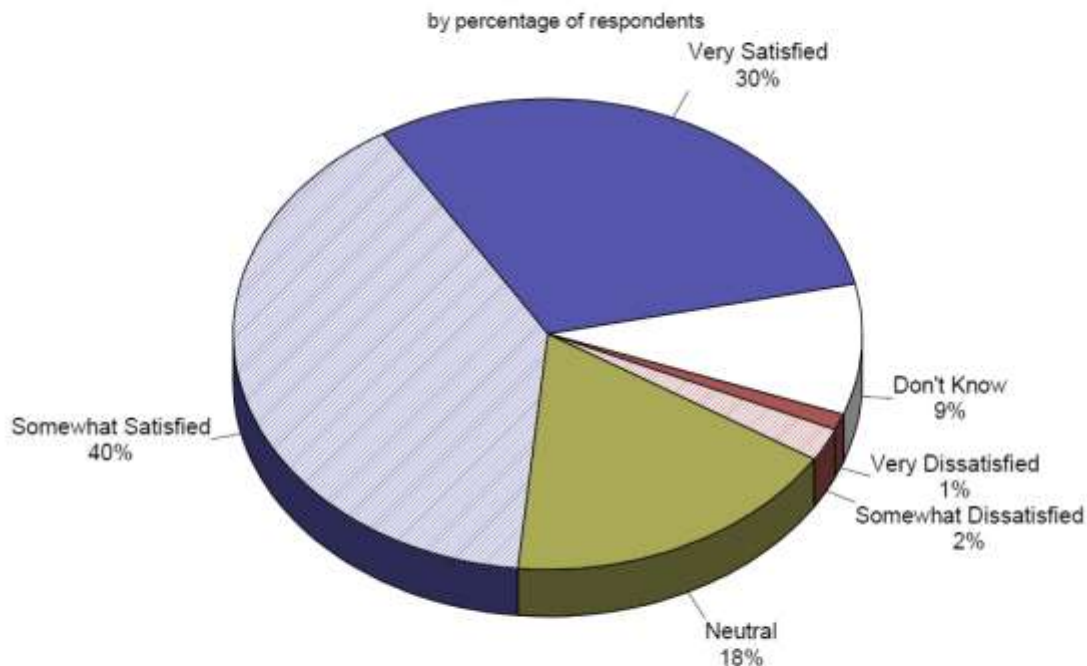
Q1. How important are high quality parks, trails, recreation facilities and services to the quality of life in Montgomery County?

by percentage of respondents



Based on the sum of very satisfied and somewhat satisfied responses 70% of respondents are satisfied with the overall value their household receives from the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department, 18% of respondents are neutral, and 3% were either somewhat or very dissatisfied. One out of four respondents (25%) indicated they are very proud of M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks recreation facilities, parks, and services, 42% indicated they are proud, 26% are neutral, and only 2% indicated they were not proud or not at all proud.

Q20. Satisfaction with the overall value your household receives from the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department



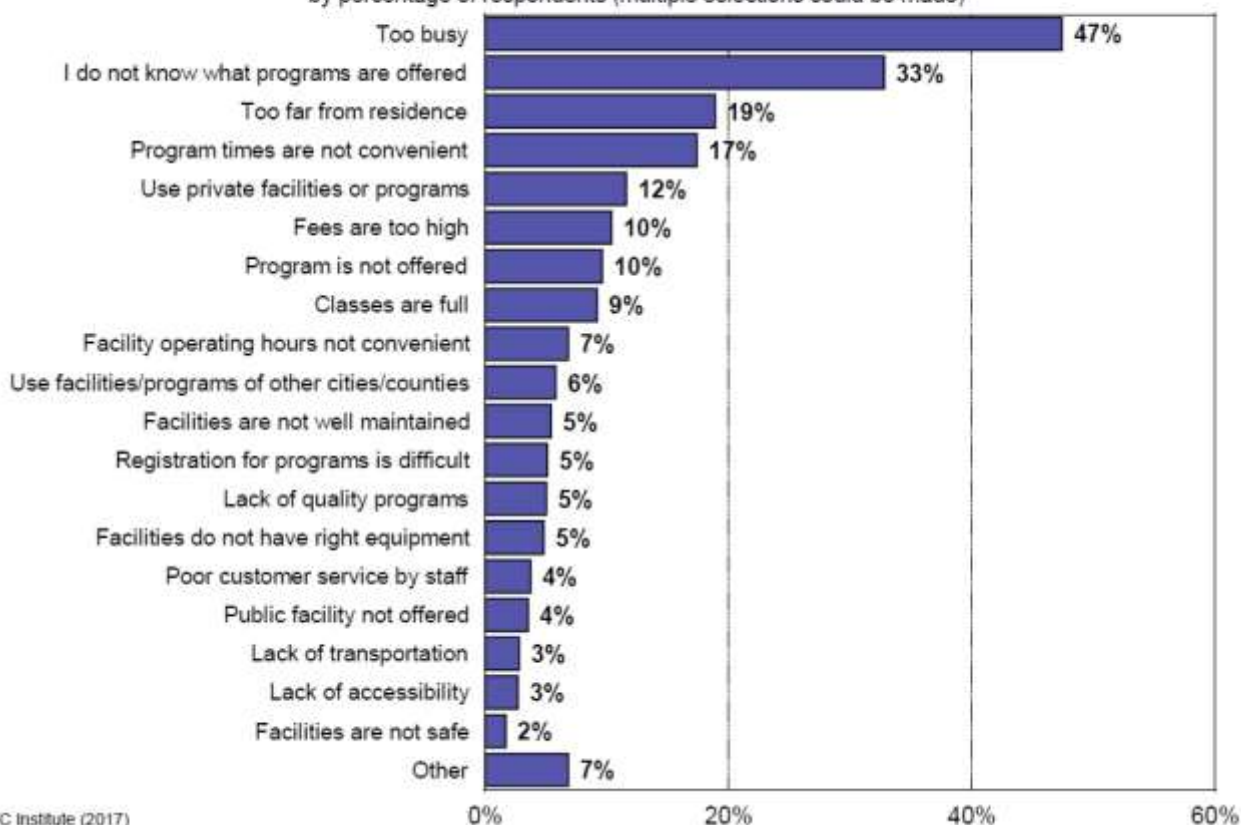
ETC Institute (2017)

**BARRIERS TO PARK, FACILITY AND PROGRAM USAGE**

Respondents were asked from a list of 20 potential reasons to identify what prevents them from using parks, recreation facilities, or programs of the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department more often. The top four reasons selected were: being too busy (47%), not knowing what programs are offered (33%), programs are too far from the residence (19%), and program times are not convenient (17%).

Q7. Reasons why your household does not use parks, recreation facilities, or programs of the M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department more often.

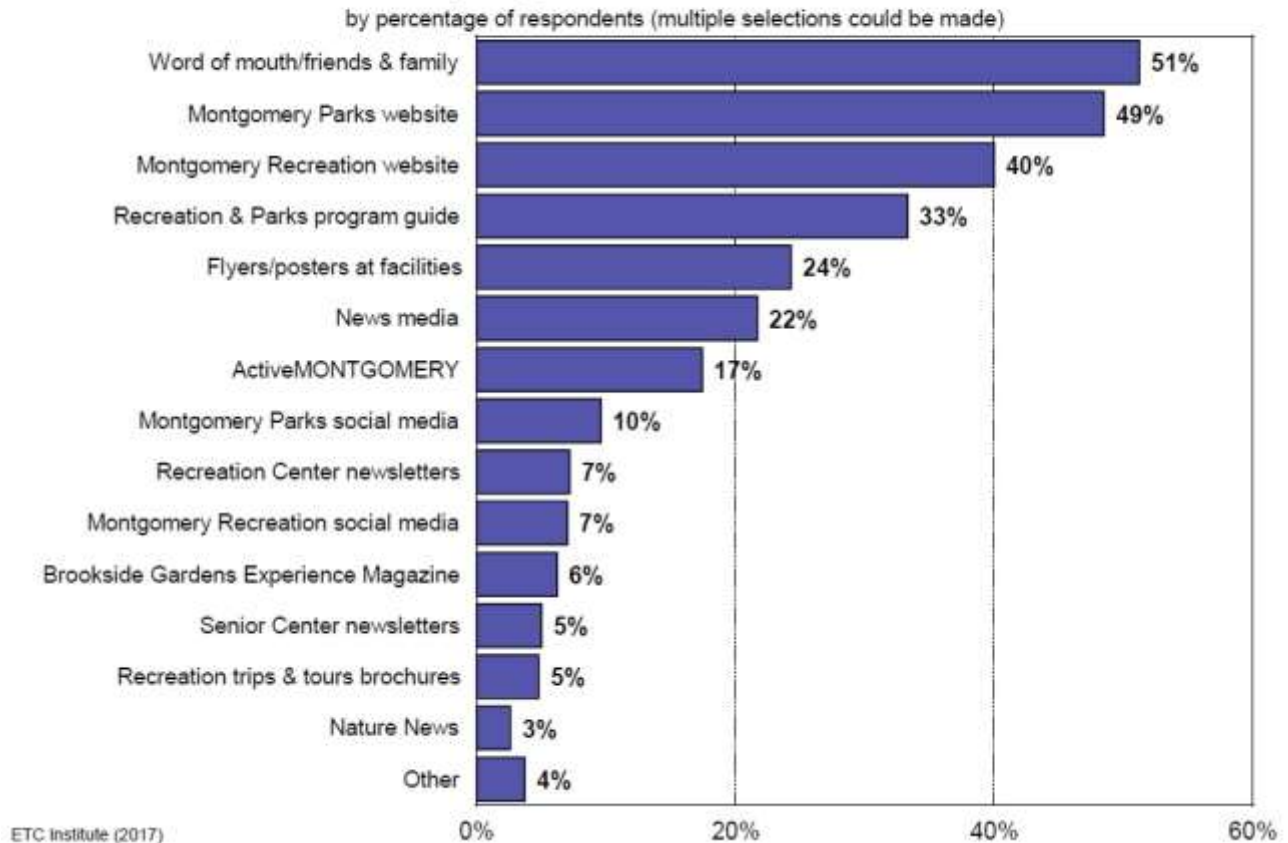
by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



ETC Institute (2017)

Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents indicated they learn about M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department programs and activities by word of mouth from friends and family, 29% use the Montgomery Parks website, 40% use the Montgomery Recreation website, and 33% use the Recreation and Parks program guide.

Q18. Ways respondents learn about M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department programs and activities

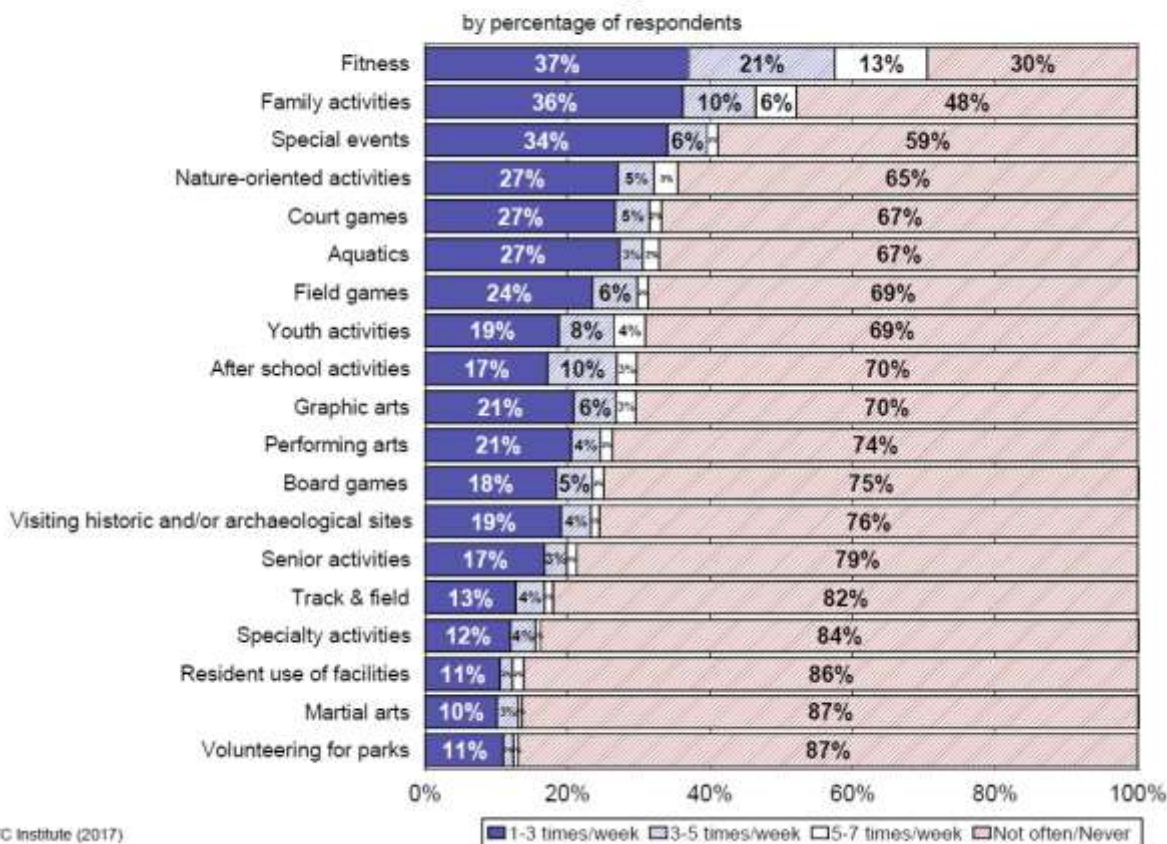




CURRENT PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION ACTIVITIES

All 705 respondents indicated how often they currently participate in 19 various activities, and indicated how their usage of those facilities may change over the next ten years. The three facilities which respondents indicated they participated in most often, based on the sum of 1-3 times/week, 3-5 times/week, and 5-7 times/week responses were: fitness (weight lifting, aerobics, walk/jobbing, yoga, Zumba, Pilates, spinning, nutrition, etc.) (71%), family activities, (52%), and special events (concerts, festivals, movie nights, etc.) (42%).

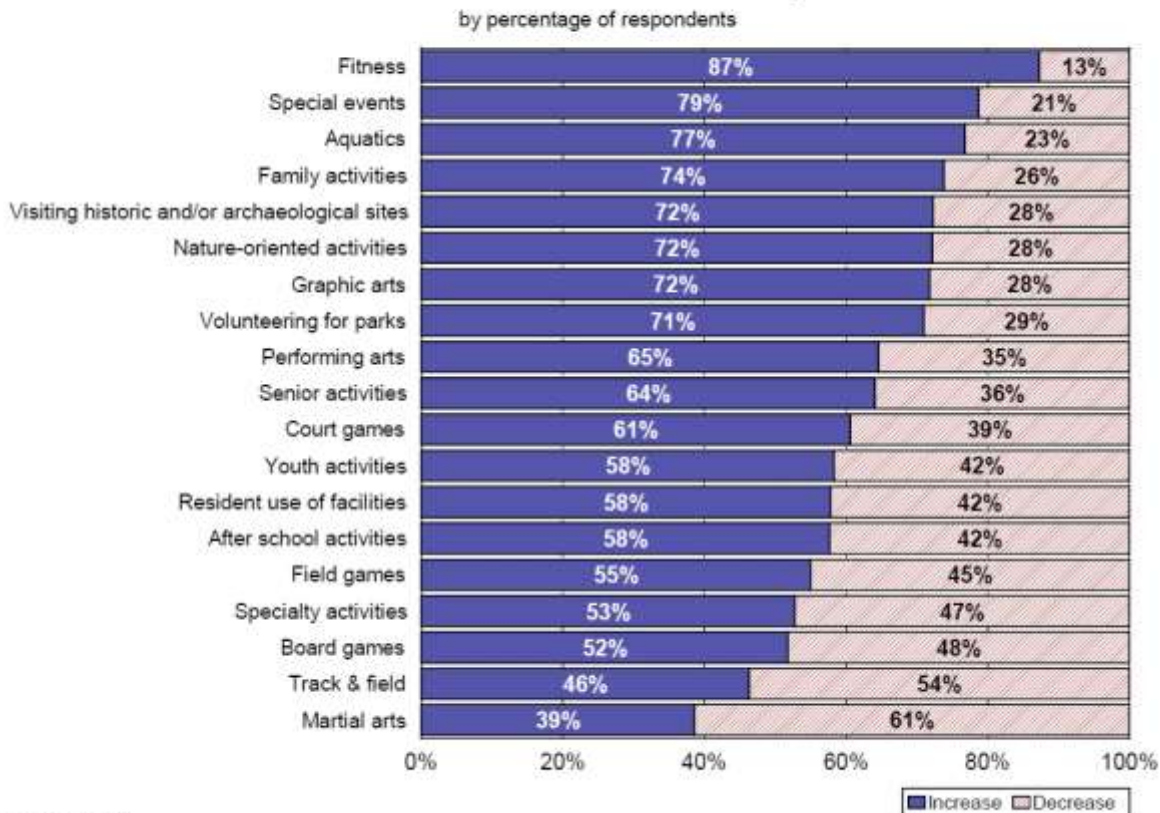
Q14. How often respondents currently participate in the following activities.



Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents indicated they rarely (not often/never) participate in volunteering for parks (stream cleanups, weed warriors, water quality monitoring, trail building and maintenance, tree planning, deer management, public gardens, nature centers) and martial arts (karate, boxing, judo, etc.). Martial arts also received the highest number of respondents who indicated their participation in the program would decrease over the next 10 years.

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents indicated their participation in fitness (weight lifting, aerobics, walk/jobbing, yoga, Zumba, Pilates, spinning, nutrition, etc.) activities would increase over the next 10 years, 79% indicated their participation in special events (concerts, festivals, movie nights, etc.) would increase over the next 10 years, and 77% of respondents indicated their participation in aquatics (swimming, diving, competition, scuba, etc.) would increase over the next 10 years.

Q14-1. How will the usage of the following types of activities increase or decrease over the next 10 years?



ETC Institute (2017)

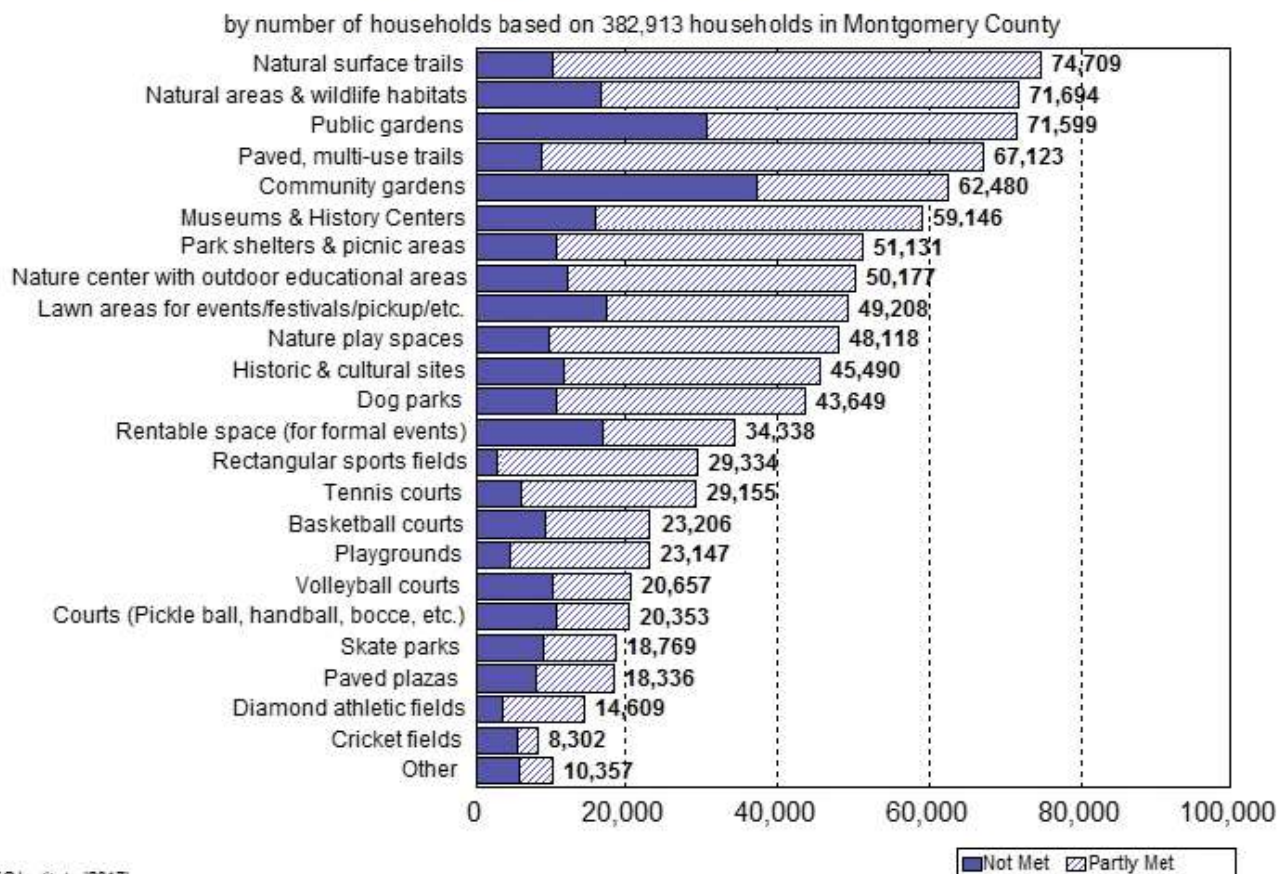


FACILITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Facility Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 24 recreation facilities and amenities and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various facilities.

The three recreation facilities with the highest percentage of households that indicated a need for the facility were: paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) (70%), natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding) (69%), and natural areas and wildlife habitats (52%). When ETC Institute analyzed the needs in the community, three facilities had an unmet need that affected more than 70,000 households. ETC Institute estimates a total of 74,709 of the 382,913 households in Montgomery County have unmet needs for natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding). The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 24 facilities that were assessed is shown in the chart below.

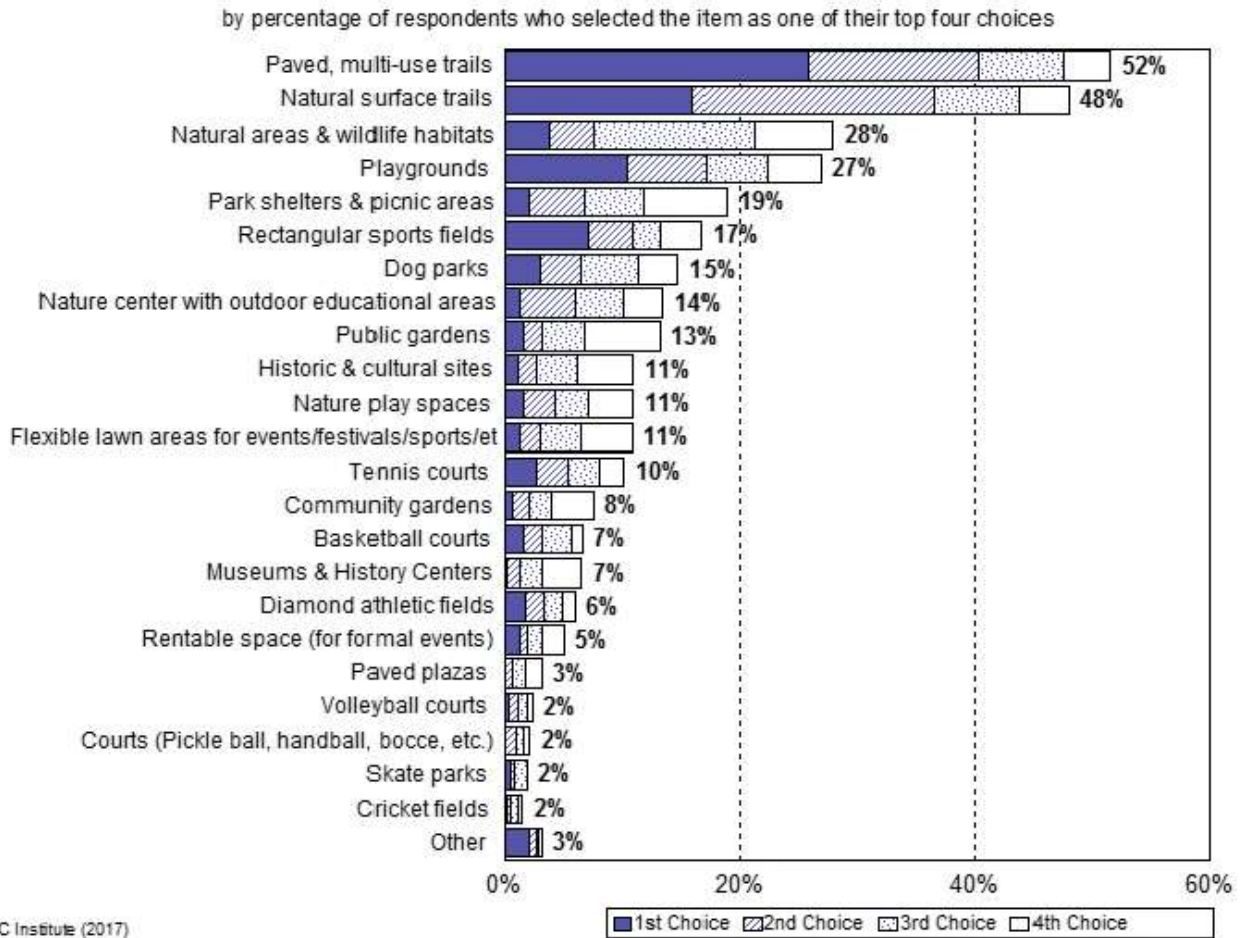
Q10-3. Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Facilities Are Being Partly Met or Not Met



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Facility Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each facility, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each facility. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the three most important facilities to residents were: paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) (52%), natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding) (48%), and natural areas and wildlife habitats (28%). The percentage of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in the chart below.

Q11. Which four facilities are most important to your household?





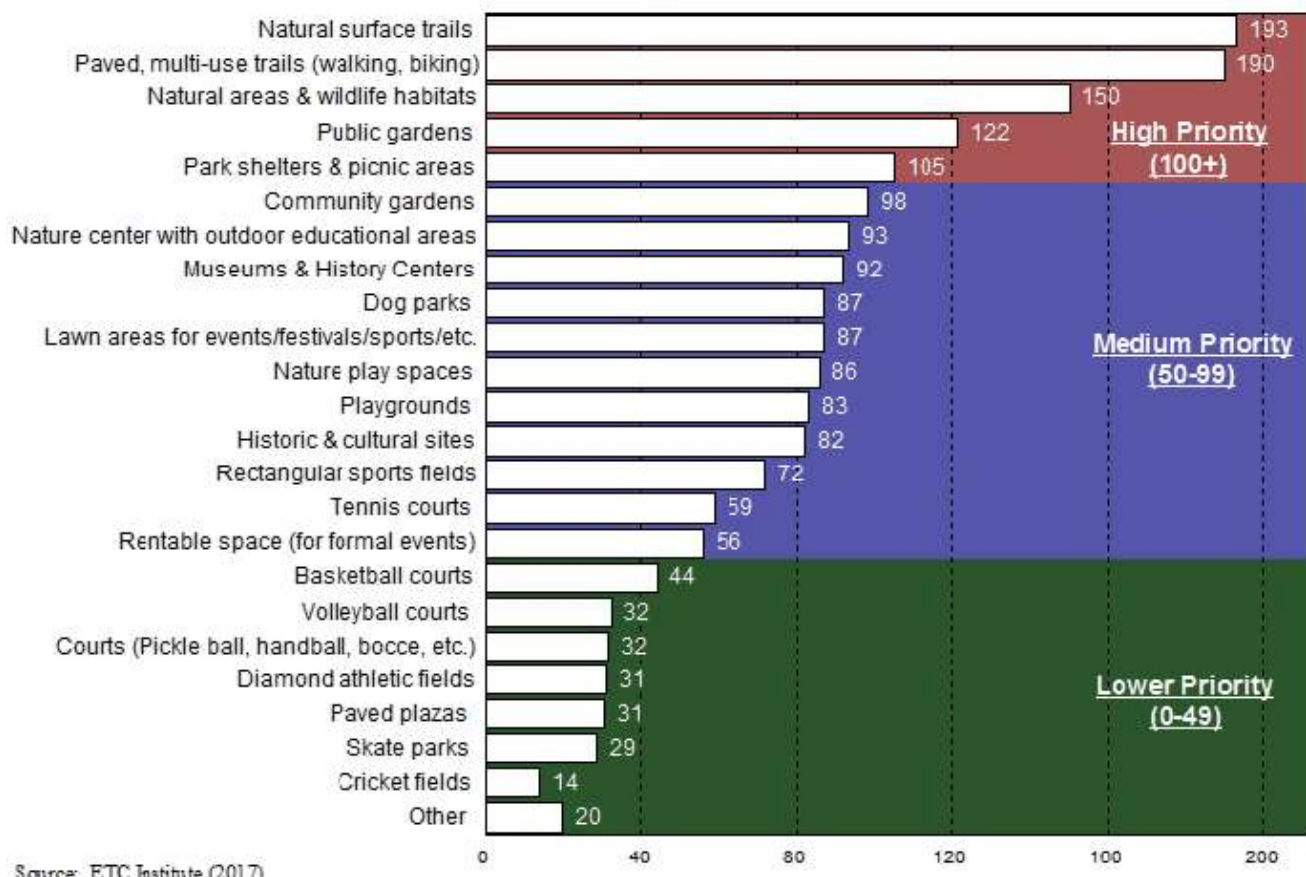
Priorities for Facility Investments: The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility.

Based on the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following five facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding) (PIR=193)
- Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) (PIR=190)
- Natural areas and wildlife habitats (PIR=150)
- Public gardens (PIR=122)
- Park shelters and picnic areas (PIR=105)

The chart on the following page shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 24 facilities that were assessed on the survey.

Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating



ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

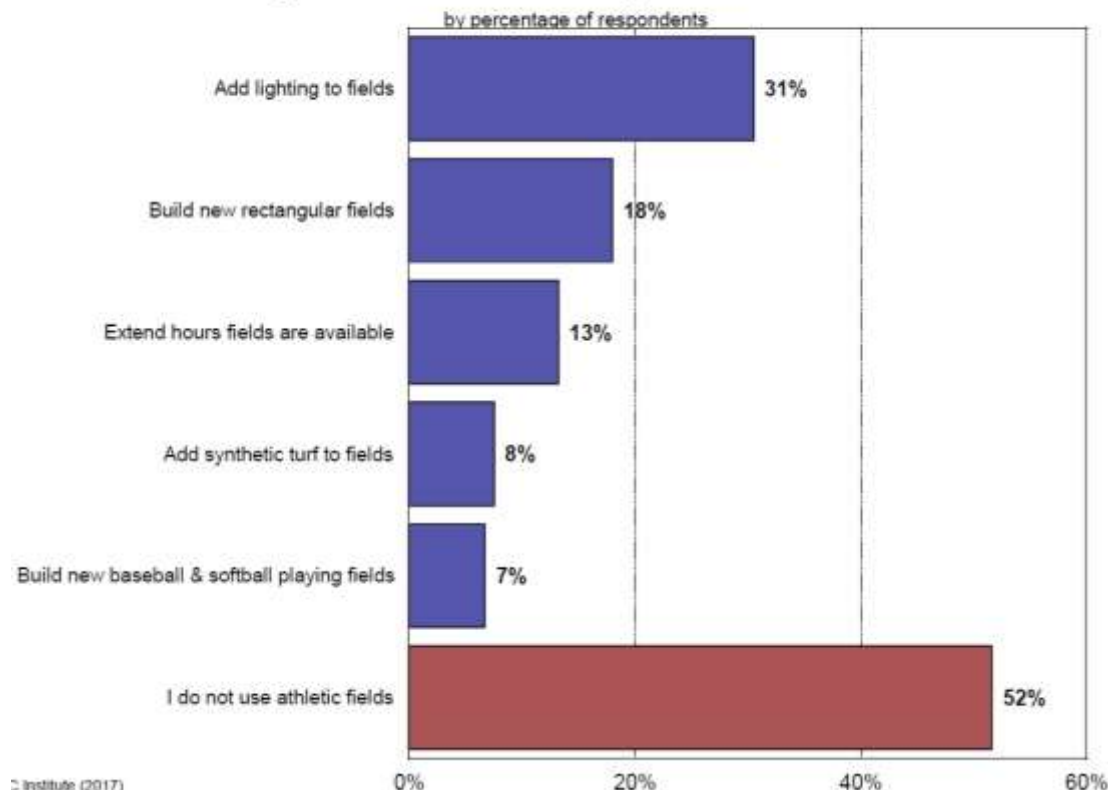
Montgomery County asked its respondents to indicate the ways they travel to parks, trails, and recreation facilities in the County. The most used methods of transportation are driving (89%), walking (77%), and biking (39%) followed by the Metrorail (12%) and bus (9%).

- A majority of respondents indicated the latest they would consider using outdoor recreation facilities was between 8pm and 9pm during weekends and weekdays.
- Roughly one out of three respondents indicated the latest they would consider using indoor recreation facilities was between 9pm and 10pm or 8pm and 9pm during the weekends and weekdays.
- The most important improvements that could be made to baseball, softball, and rectangular fields are:
 - Add lighting to fields (31%)
 - Building new rectangular fields (18%)
 - Extend hours fields are available (13%)

Most (52%) of respondents indicated they do not use athletic fields.

- Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents indicated M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department should ensure children (under 13) and teens (ages 13-17) are their top priority to serve for programs.
- Fifty-percent (50%) of respondents indicated they would be interested in using surveys in the future as a public engagement tool, 38% indicated community events, and 32% indicated they would use online forums.

Q16. Which two improvements are most important to you and members of your household?





CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Facility Priorities: When analyzing the facilities offered by M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks the three most important facilities to households were also among the highest for unmet need. ETC Institute estimates that at least 65,000 households in Montgomery County have unmet needs for paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking), natural areas and wildlife habitats, and natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding). Focusing on these facilities within the County would provide the greatest benefit for the largest number of residents.

In order to ensure that Montgomery County continues to meet the needs and expectations of the community, ETC Institute recommends that M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks sustain and/or improve the performance in areas that were identified as “high priorities” by the Priority Investment Rating (PIR). The facilities and programs with the highest PIR ratings are listed below.

Facility Priorities

- Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horse-back riding) (PIR=193)
- Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) (PIR=190)
- Natural areas and wildlife habitats (PIR=150)
- Public gardens (PIR=122)
- Park shelters and picnic areas (PIR=105)

Action Items: When given a list of 13 action items respondents indicated the three most important actions for M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and the Montgomery County Recreation Department to prioritize based on the sum of respondents’ top three choices, are: providing opportunities to improve physical health and fitness (54%), conserve natural resources and the environment (45%), providing recreation facilities/programs for children and teens (29%), and making Montgomery County a more desirable place to live (29%). Providing history programs (6%) was the least important action for respondents.

Funding Priorities: The four actions respondents are most supportive of M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County Recreation Department funding with tax dollars in order to improve the Parks and Recreation system, based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, are:

- Repair/renovate existing park facilities (49%)
- Purchase land for natural resource protection and conservation for future generations (45%)
- Develop new walking/biking trails and connect existing trails (40%)
- Purchase land for developing trails (29%)

For complete survey results, reference **Appendix A**.

CHAPTER FOUR - KEY STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

4.1 OVERVIEW

Communities Connect Consulting was retained for professional experts' services to conduct an extensive public engagement outreach effort, focused on minority communities and to assist in the development of *the 2017 Montgomery County Parks, Recreation and Open Space*

(PROS) Plan Update. Montgomery County Parks encouraged the involvement and participation of the minority communities in the planning and review process.



Over a period of four weeks, six (6) focus groups consisting of 61 total participants were conducted with an experienced facilitator, a native language interpreter, and a research analyst to record notes. Throughout the process, all ideas from the public were carefully documented, and used to summarize the development of the outreach plan to the minority communities.

These focus groups were open to individuals who live, in the selected specific minority population areas. The group was evenly distributed in terms of race/ethnicity, with 30% African American, African, or Black; 33% Hispanic and/or Latino; and 37% Asian or Pacific Islander. Participants resided in 16 different zip codes, and ranged from recent arrivals to residents living in the U.S. between 5-10 years. Of participants, 58% were female and 42% were male.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

From the beginning of February 2017, the Communities Connect team orchestrated a diverse public involvement process that incorporated an intense outreach effort in the minority communities organizing six (6) focus groups to hear what the minority communities of Montgomery County had to say, gathering opinions, beliefs and attitudes, encouraging discussion and providing an opportunity to learn more about the parks. The focus group team was able to deal tactfully with outspoken group members, keep the discussion on track, and made sure every participant was heard.

In order to gather input and test ideas with the public, the focus groups were held over a period of four weeks. These focus groups were open to individuals who live in the selected specific minority population areas and were consistently well attended, indicating a strong community interest in the future of the Parks.

Following Communities Connect's introduction presentation, participants were asked to respond to five (5) questions in order to gather verbal feedback. Additionally, respondents were asked to fill out an eight (8) question survey. Each focus group was recorded and an audiotape of each meeting is provided as part of the Communities Connect report. Communities Connect engaged in intensive outreach and partnering efforts in order to draw attention to the PROS Plan Outreach process and encourage participation at focus groups. These efforts returned very positive results, as participation at each focus group ranged from 8 to 15 people.

4.3 FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

In this report, findings have been summarized by focus group to show preferences by country of origin. Key themes from all focus groups have also been extracted to demonstrate overall non-native resident preferences. In addition, location information was gathered from each participant, including city, zip code, and nearest school. Some participants chose not to state the location of their residence. The following tables detail the location information of participants, where provided.



Montgomery Parks

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT SUMMARY

| <i>Total Number of Focus Groups</i> | <i>Total Number of Participants</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 6 | 61 |

CITY OF RESIDENCY

| City | % | City | % | City | % |
|---------------|-----|---------|----|--------------------|-----|
| Silver Spring | 28% | Wheaton | 5% | Bethesda | 2% |
| Gaithersburg | 21% | Derwood | 3% | Montgomery Village | 2% |
| Takoma Park | 10% | Potomac | 3% | Rockville | 2% |
| North Potomac | 5% | Bel Air | 2% | No response | 18% |

ZIP CODE OF RESIDENCY

| ZIP CODE | % |
|-------------|-----|
| 20902 | 15% |
| 20877 | 13% |
| 20878 | 8% |
| 20904 | 8% |
| 20912 | 8% |
| 20901 | 7% |
| 20906 | 5% |
| 20817 | 3% |
| 20855 | 3% |
| 20879 | 3% |
| 20886 | 3% |
| 20852 | 2% |
| 20854 | 2% |
| 20905 | 2% |
| 20910 | 2% |
| 21014 | 2% |
| 29854 | 2% |
| No response | 13% |

NEAREST SCHOOL TO RESIDENCE

| SCHOOL | % |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Gaithersburg High School | 7% |
| Arcola Elementary School | 5% |
| Candlewood Elementary School | 3% |
| Fairland Elementary School | 3% |
| Georgian Forest Elementary School | 3% |
| Highland Elementary School | 3% |
| Potomac Elementary School | 3% |
| Stone Mill Elementary School | 3% |
| Ashburton Elementary School | 2% |
| Blair High School | 2% |
| Brown Station Elementary School | 2% |
| Burnt Mills Elementary School | 2% |
| Cannon Road Elementary School | 2% |
| Davis Library | 2% |
| Falls Mead Elementary School | 2% |
| Farmland Elementary School | 2% |
| Glen Haven Elementary School | 2% |
| Glenallen Elementary School | 2% |
| Jones Lane Elementary School | 2% |
| Leiderman School | 2% |
| Page Elementary School | 2% |
| Piney Branch Elementary School | 2% |
| Sligo Creek Elementary School | 2% |
| Stedwik Elementary School | 2% |
| Stonegate Elementary School | 2% |
| Westwood School | 2% |
| No response | 39% |

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| Zip Code of Residency | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-------|----|-------------|-----|
| 20902 | 15% | 20906 | 5% | 20854 | 2% |
| 20877 | 13% | 20817 | 3% | 20905 | 2% |
| 20878 | 8% | 20855 | 3% | 20910 | 2% |
| 20904 | 8% | 20879 | 3% | 21014 | 2% |
| 20912 | 8% | 20886 | 3% | 29854 | 2% |
| 20901 | 7% | 20852 | 2% | No response | 13% |

| Nearest School to Residence | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|----|--------------------------------|--|
| Gaithersburg High School | 7% | Blair High School | 2% | Jones Lane Elementary School | |
| Arcola Elementary School | 5% | Brown Station Elementary School | 2% | Leiderman School | |
| Candlewood Elementary School | 3% | Burnt Mills Elementary School | 2% | Page Elementary School | |
| Fairland Elementary School | 3% | Cannon Road Elementary School | 2% | Piney Branch Elementary School | |
| Georgian Forest Elementary School | 3% | Davis Library | 2% | Sligo Creek Elementary School | |
| Highland Elementary School | 3% | Falls Mead Elementary School | 2% | Stedwik Elementary School | |
| Potomac Elementary School | 3% | Farmland Elementary School | 2% | Stonegate Elementary School | |
| Stone Mill Elementary School | 3% | Glen Haven Elementary School | 2% | Westwood School | |
| Ashburton Elementary School | 2% | Glenallen Elementary School | 2% | No response | |

Demographics and additional context and details regarding the focus group results are included here. Full, detailed responses to questions and the survey can be found in Appendix B, where the full Communities Connect report is provided under separate cover.



FOCUS GROUP 1: UP-COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Focus Group No.: 1

Date: February 16, 2017

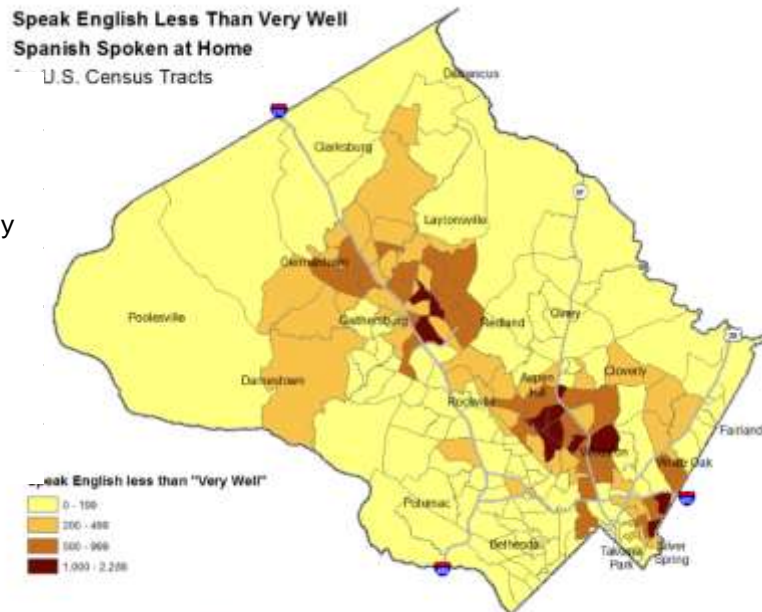
Geographic site area: Upcounty

Language: Spanish

of participants: 11

Group: Latino

City: Gaithersburg



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Research & Special Projects, Montgomery County Planning Dept.

PARTICIPANTS AND FINDINGS

This group was characterized by generally having small children in the household. Participants generally use the parks to spend time with family and for social gatherings. The group in this session had two recurring concerns:

- (1) That there should be more focus on facilities and amenities for small children ages 2 - 3 and their parents and;
- (2) that there should be more efforts for safety, particularly with security and lighting issues being highlighted.

A variety of amenity and facility related desires were mentioned, including vending areas to buy water, benches, and a place to change the children. Ten years from now, participants would like to see more parks, bigger parks, and parks with more activities for children and sports. The group also expressed that they would like the park to communicate more with them in their language and in ways that are representative of their communities. Additionally, some expressed confusion regarding permitting processes.

| # | Name | Country of Origin |
|----|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Cristian | Honduras |
| 2 | Reyna | El Salvador |
| 3 | Rafael | El Salvador |
| 4 | Myrna | El Salvador |
| 5 | Cindy | El Salvador |
| 6 | Mynor | Guatemala |
| 7 | Lastenia | Ecuador |
| 8 | Ana | El Salvador |
| 9 | Gilberto | El Salvador |
| 10 | German | El Salvador |

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FOCUS GROUP 2: MID-COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Focus Group No.: 2

Date: February 17, 2017

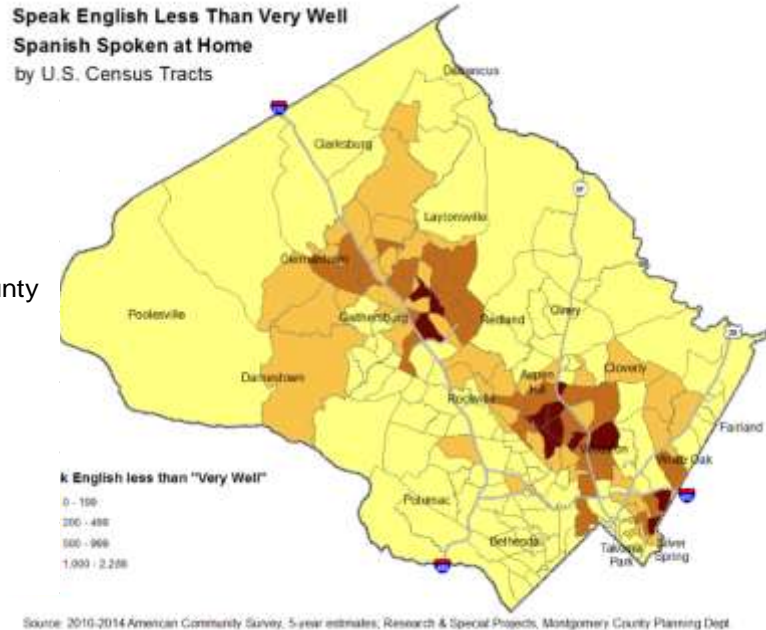
Geographic site area: Mid-County

Language: Spanish

of participants: 10

Group: Latino

City: Wheaton



PARTICIPANTS AND FINDINGS

Generally, the group in this session had four recurring concerns:

- 1) Safety and security with a focus on illicit activities and concerns about poor lighting;
- (2) Having more services for children, including programming and spaces where small children can play safely;
- (3) Accessibility was a recurring theme, particularly with the danger of crossing Georgia Avenue, the high cost of renting facilities; and
- (4) Cleanliness of facilities was also an issue for this group.

This group also expressed the desire for there to be vending at the parks. Additionally, this group discussed the need for more outreach and communication from the parks to the community to facilitate accessibility for community members. It is worth noting that this group also discusses language barriers and wanting more culturally relevant programming as sub-themes of accessibility of the parks. Though not discussed in depth in the focus group, survey responses showed a desire from participants of this focus group to conduct outreach to better serve the elderly.

| # | Name | Country of Origin |
|----|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Ana Maria | Peru |
| 2 | Nurys | El Salvador |
| 3 | Rosa | Honduras |
| 4 | Maria | Honduras |
| 5 | Lina | El Salvador |
| 6 | Socorro | Venezuela |
| 7 | Yissel | Puerto Rico |
| 8 | Brenda | Puerto Rico |
| 9 | Margarita | Mexico |
| 10 | Monica | Mexico |
| 11 | Alan | |
| 12 | Patrick | |



FOCUS GROUP 3: DOWN-EAST COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Focus Group No.: 3

Date: February 20, 2017

Geographic site area: Down & East County

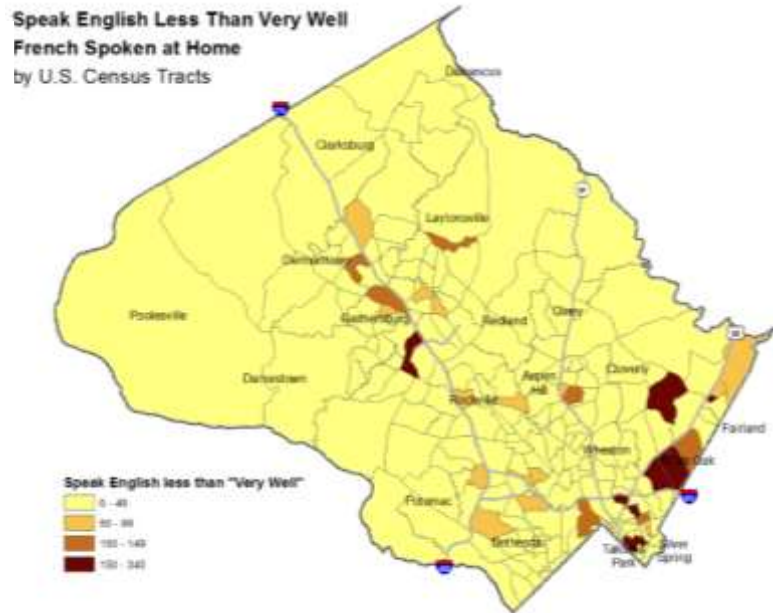
Language: African, French

of Participants: 9

Group: African

City: Silver Spring/ Takoma

Zipcodes Represented: 20901(2) 20912(4)



PARTICIPANTS AND FINDINGS

Answers in this focus group were characterized by having settled in Montgomery County very recently compared to other focus groups. All but one respondent indicated they have lived in Montgomery County for less than one year. Some participants in this group had not yet had the opportunity to visit a park however many spoke about what a park is like in their native country and what they would like to see here.

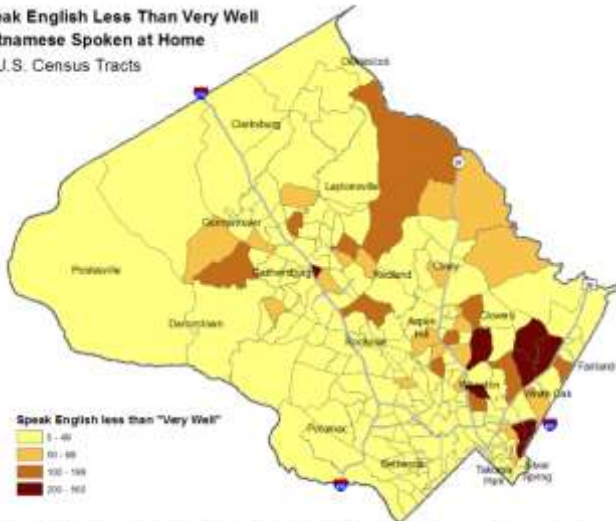
Participants were primarily interested in having more varied and targeted sports activities like health and wellness programming for people of all ages. It was also important to this group that the park act as a place of building community through social gatherings so people can meet each other. Cleanliness of the parks, including trails, was an issue that came up as well for this focus group. This group was much less familiar with Montgomery County Parks and how they operate and felt that transportation was a barrier to park access as well as expressed the importance of park guidance, including signage.

| # | Name | Country of Origin |
|---|------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Cyprius | Cameroon |
| 2 | Ines | Cameroon |
| 3 | Fuka | Cameroon |
| 4 | Oliedraogo | Burkin-Faso |
| 5 | Chabrol | Cameroon |
| 6 | Yves | Cameroon |
| 7 | Christele | Cameroon |
| 8 | Wamo | Cameroon |
| 9 | Beacon | Cameroon |

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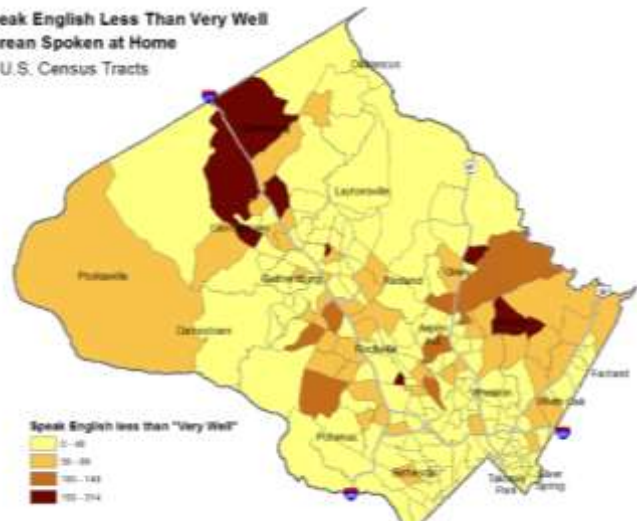
FOCUS GROUP 4: UP-DOWN EAST COUNTY

Speak English Less Than Very Well
Vietnamese Spoken at Home
by U.S. Census Tracts



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Research & Special Projects, Montgomery County Planning Dept.

Speak English Less Than Very Well
Korean Spoken at Home
by U.S. Census Tracts



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Research & Special Projects, Montgomery County Planning Dept.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Focus Group No.: 4
Language: Asian

Date: February 21, 2017
of Answers: 12

Geographic Site Area: Up - Down county
Group: Asian Pacific

PARTICIPANTS AND FINDINGS

Participants in this focus group highly stressed the importance of various types of programming, including health and fitness programming, cultural programming, and events. This group talked about parks as meeting points and vehicles for community building and gatherings. In regards to increased accessibility to the parks, this group discussed transportation, proximity, and more outreach to diverse communities, youth and seniors.

| # | Name | Country of Origin |
|----|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Tho | |
| 2 | Stan | |
| 3 | Matthew | |
| 4 | Asoka | |
| 5 | Ashima | |
| 6 | Rajika | |
| 7 | Song | |
| 8 | Diane | |
| 9 | Sam | |
| 10 | Nazmin | |
| 11 | Ishani | |
| 12 | Neel | |
| 13 | Jaemin | |



FOCUS GROUP 5: DOWN-EAST COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Focus Group No.: 5

Date: 02/24/2017

Geographic site area: Down & East County

Language: African, Amharic

of Answers: 9

Group: Ethiopian/Ethiopian American

City: East Silver Spring



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates; Research & Special Projects, Montgomery County Planning Dept.

PARTICIPANTS AND FINDINGS

Participants in this focus group predominantly utilize parks for health and fitness and sports. When discussing improvements, participants stressed the need for more security and regards for safety.

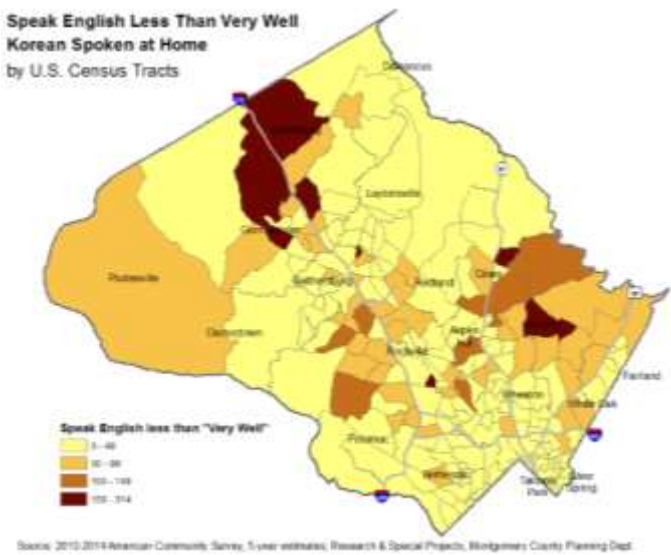
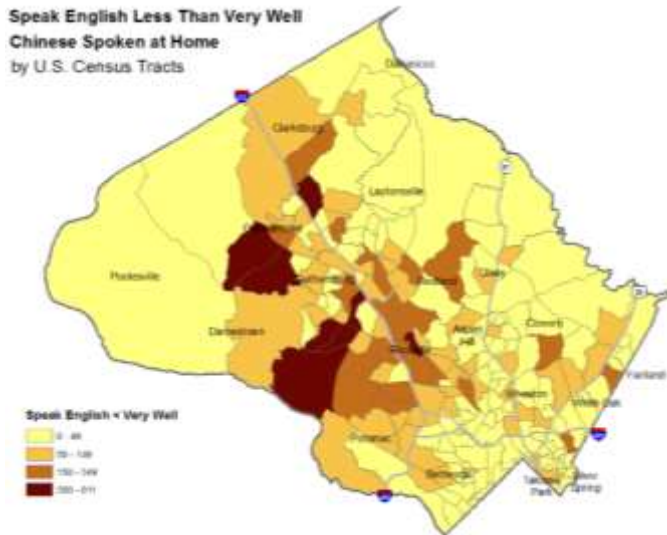
Importantly, this group discussed ways that the parks can better engage communities to further their mission, including through partnerships with schools, volunteerism and cultural programming. Regarding how the parks can best reach out to the community participants suggested not focusing only on online outreach but also to conducting outreach through more traditional media such as print (flyers, grocery stores, schedule inserts) and radio.

The desire for urban parks was also expressed along with the concern that with increased population in the county, there should be close attention paid to preserving existing green spaces.

| # | Name | Country of Origin |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Helena | Ethiopia |
| 2 | Ephrem | Ethiopia |
| 3 | Saba | Ethiopia |
| 4 | Mekedes | Ethiopia |
| 5 | Abdurahr | Ethiopia |
| 6 | Tilahum | Ethiopia |
| 7 | Wondwos | Ethiopia |
| 8 | Rebecca | Ethiopia |
| 9 | Amde | Ethiopia |

FOCUS GROUP 6: UP-WEST COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS



Focus Group No.: 6
Language: Asian

Date: March 3, 2017
of Answers: 12

Geographic Site Area: Up - West County
Group: Asian

PARTICIPANTS AND FINDINGS

For this focus group, culturally relevant programming and park design came up as prominent themes. Participants expressed that they would like to see parks utilized as centers to promote cultural understanding and learning particularly through more programming and events.

Regarding events, some participants felt there could be expanded capacity to accommodate large outdoor events that would need staging and other related equipment like concerts. The majority of participants indicated that they currently utilize the parks for social gatherings with large groups of people like alumni associations or church members. It was suggested to work in partnership with the community, particularly through non-profits to accomplish more cultural programming. Respondents expressed concern with the high cost of Montgomery County Parks as compared to other similar services or adjacent counties.

| # | Name | Country of Origin |
|----|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Corinna | |
| 2 | Angela | |
| 3 | Li-Fang | |
| 4 | Kihoon | |
| 5 | Haiwen | |
| 6 | Su Lee | |
| 7 | Liu | |
| 8 | HyunSook | |
| 9 | Annie | |
| 10 | Sunghee | |
| 11 | Hyunoo | |
| 12 | Chung | |



KEY THEMES FROM ALL FOCUS GROUPS

The consulting team analyzed the results of all of the focus group and survey responses, and identified the following major themes:

Improve Park Security and Safety

Eliminate illicit/illegal activities and make improvements to poor lighting. Decrease the danger of crossing Georgia Avenue by making pedestrian improvements, and provide visible security such as cameras/video recording and security personnel presence within parks and open space facilities.

Cleanliness of Facilities

Improve the cleanliness of the facilities, including trails, and trash removal.

Programming

Provide more varied and targeted sports activities and health and wellness programming for people of all ages. Target and improve programs for small children ages 2-3. Provide more cultural programming and events.

Physical Facilities

Increase facilities and amenities for small children ages 2-3 including spaces where small children can play safely and their parents can engage in meaningful activities. There is a desire for more urbanized parks to preserve existing green spaces in communities, located within walking distance. Expand the park capacity to accommodate large outdoor events that would need staging and other related equipment for venues such as concerts.

Engage Communities

Further the mission of the communities, through partnerships with schools, volunteerism and cultural programs. Many residents currently utilize the parks for social gatherings for large groups of people to hold events for alumni associations, churches, and culturally relevant programs.

Utilize parks as meeting points and vehicles for community building and gatherings. The parks should function as a place for building community through social gatherings so that people can meet each other. Work in partnership with the community, through nonprofits to accomplish more cultural programming. Parks should be utilized as centers to promote cultural understanding and learning particularly through more ethnic programming and events.

Accessibility

Eliminate language barriers in staffing and signage. Conduct outreach to better serve the elderly and families. Eliminate the high cost of utilizing Montgomery County Parks as compared to other similar services or those in adjacent counties.

Provide outreach through more traditional media such as print (flyers, grocery stores, schedule inserts) and radio. Regular communication is needed from the parks to the community to facilitate accessibility for community members. The high cost of renting facilities is prohibitive. Transportation cost is a barrier to park access for many participants.

CHAPTER FIVE - INTERCEPT SURVEY #1- USAGE, INTEREST, AND MARKETING PREFERENCES

5.1 OVERVIEW

In order to understand the needs and desires of the community, the PROS Consulting team collected survey information from residents and system users via intercept survey method. The surveys were conducted December 2016 throughout February 2017.

The purpose of these surveys was to help develop a better understanding of the needs, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Montgomery County residents in relation to parks, natural resources, and recreation activities. The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 150 residents/system users. The goal was exceeded and a total of 174 responses were collected throughout this process.

5.2 METHODOLOGY

The project team used “intercept surveys” to collect information from the public about the system. Intercept surveys are conducted in-person, in a public place, and consist of a short, quick interview about a certain topic. In this case, the intercept survey consisted of three questions, and were carried in local parks, recreation centers, grocery stores, and churches. Gathering community input in this way allows Montgomery County to understand the perspectives of both users and non-users.

Intercept Survey #1 was administered by members of the PROS Consulting team, which included Mandarin, Spanish, and Hindi translators, to enable survey collection from a representative cross-section of County residents. There were two rounds of community outreach for this survey:

- Community recreation centers, December 2016
 - Plum Gar Neighborhood Recreation Center
 - Germantown Community Recreation Center
 - Upper County Community Recreation Center
 - Gwendolyn E. Coffield Community Recreation Center
 - Long Branch Community Recreation Center
 - White Oak Community Recreation Center
- Local grocery stores, churches, and parks, February 2017
 - Islamic Society of Germantown (ISG)
 - Great Wall Supermarket
 - Everlu Food
 - Angkor Supermarket
 - Wheaton Regional Park

Respondents were asked whether they used Montgomery County parks and facilities; if yes which parks they preferred, and if no, why not. They were also asked if there were any programs and amenities that should be added or changed, and how they would like to be communicated with in the future regarding program offerings, events, etc. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide additional comments via an open-ended question. Surveys were offered in English, Spanish, Mandarin and Hindi. Consultants noted that some were reluctant to complete the survey, possibly signaling distrust or fear.

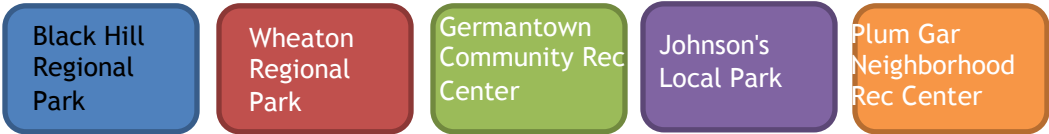


5.3 SURVEY RESULTS

The following is an overview of the top 5 answers given for each question:

PARK AND FACILITY USAGE

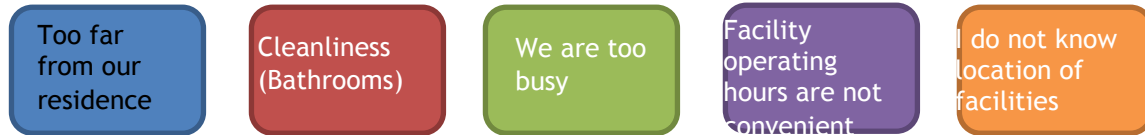
The following parks and facilities were **most visited** by those surveyed.



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PARTICIPATION BARRIERS

Those that were surveyed indicated that the following barriers prevent respondents from using Montgomery County parks, facilities, and programs.



PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES

The following programs were considered to be missing or in need of changes in the community by survey respondents.



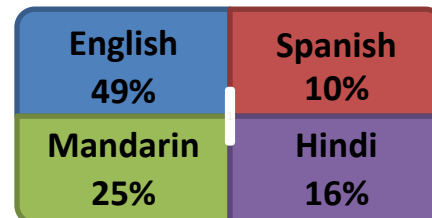
COMMUNICATION METHODS

Survey participants wanted to be communicated with about future offerings and updates in the following ways.



RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN BY PREFERRED LANGUAGE

The primary objective for this survey was reach large groups of minority community members. Of respondents who were surveyed, 51% indicated English was a secondary language in their households. Please note that just because a respondent chose to speak English during the intercept survey, doesn't necessarily mean that they don't also speak another language.



SUMMARY OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTION RESPONSES

The project team pulled our key themes of the open-ended question responses. The following are major areas in which the community expressed needs and desires in response to this survey. Detailed survey responses are included in Appendix C.

- **Positive Feedback.** Almost 30% of the feedback was a positive and satisfied comment.
- **Maintenance.** Survey respondents asked for better maintenance, from outdoor areas such as fields, landscaping beds, and sidewalks/paths to indoor facility maintenance items such as hot water, signage, and steps.
- **Additional amenities.** These items ranged from additional water fountains, waste bags, cell phone service, and restrooms to additional indoor gym space, greenspace, and flower beds.
- **Hours.** Particularly with surveys gathered at the recreation centers, respondents asked for additional operating hours for both facilities and specific programs (ping-pong).
- **Communication.** Survey respondents asked for better communication and outreach regarding updates, programs, and events. Respondents also asked for more outreach in Chinese community.



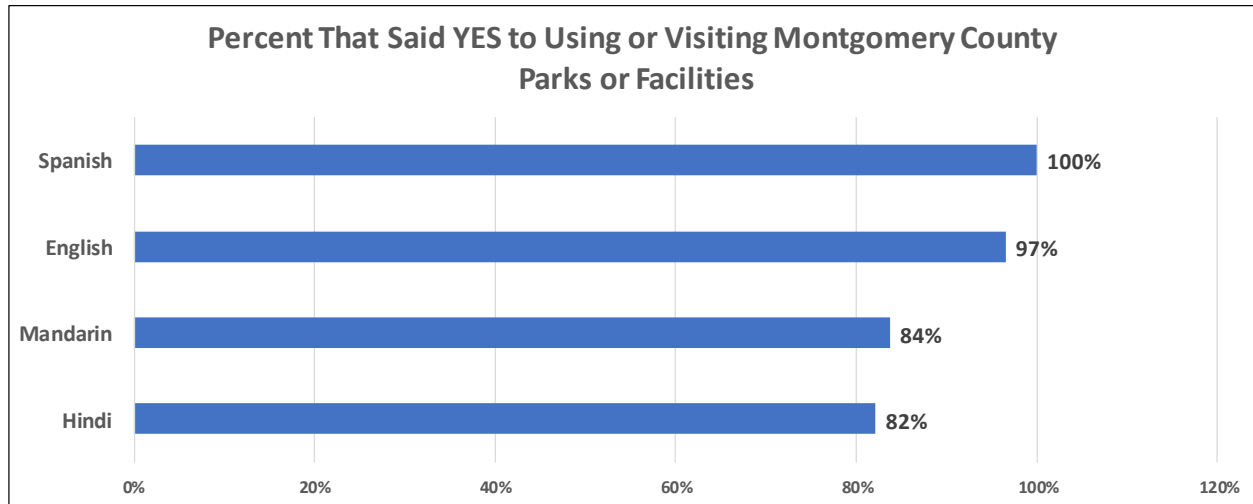
Montgomery Parks

- **Accessibility, cleanliness, & security.** A few respondents asked for better access to amenities, cleaner amenities, and better security at amenities, both indoor and outdoor.

MOST VISITED PARKS AND PROGRAM NEEDS

RESULTS BROKEN DOWN BY PREFERRED LANGUAGE OF RESPONDENTS

Question #1 in this survey asked respondents whether they use or visit Montgomery County parks or facilities. Results show that all Spanish speakers and most English speakers used parks, while fewer Mandarin and Hindi speakers had done so.



If respondents answered “No” to the first question, they were asked the reasons why they do not use Montgomery County parks or facilities. While not all respondents answered this question, of those that did, the following most common reasons were given, broken down by preferred language:

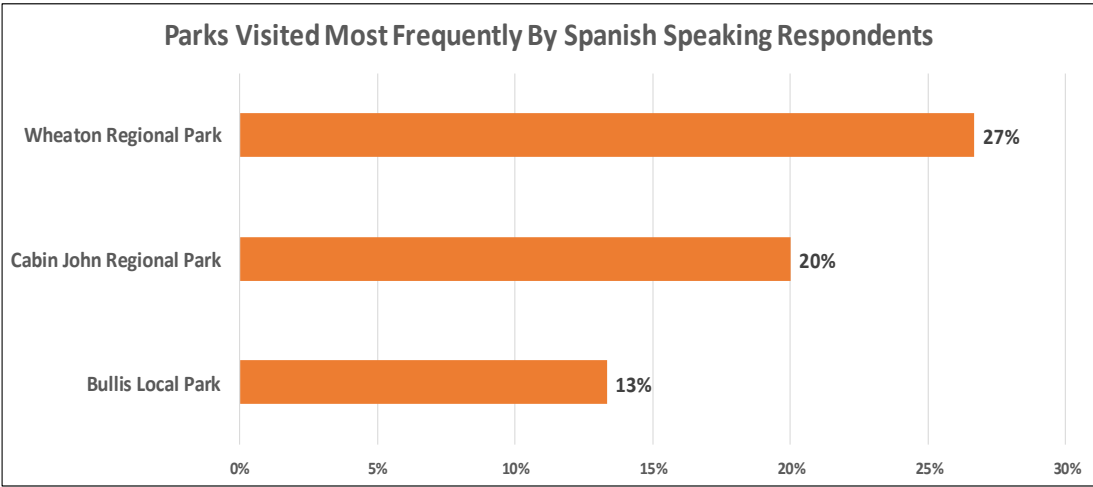
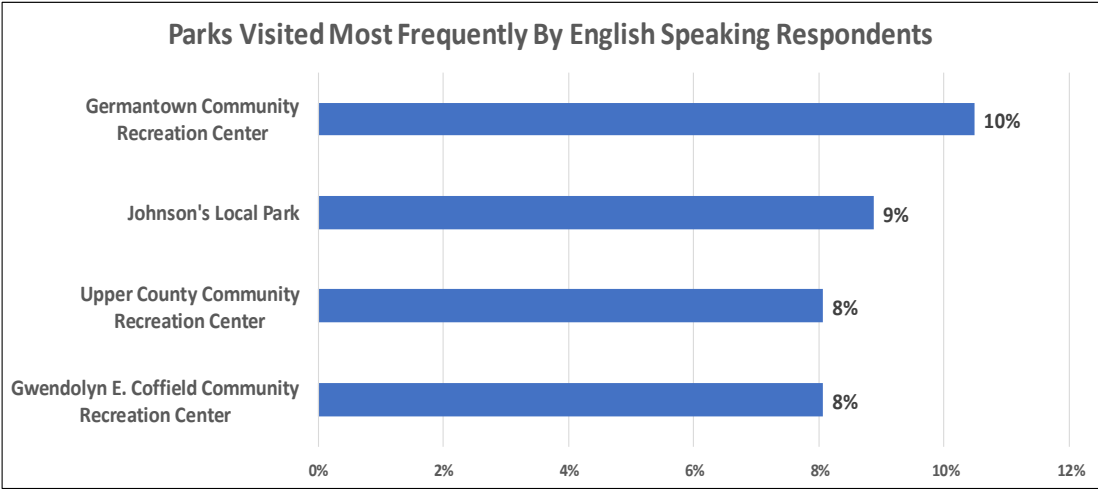
| Reasons survey respondents do not use Montgomery County Parks, by Preferred Language | |
|--|--|
| Language | Reason, and percentage stating this reason |
| English | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too far from our residence, 42% Facility operating hours, 25% |
| Spanish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too far from our residence, 100% |
| Mandarin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not know location of facilities, 20% Other, 30% |
| Hindi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities are not well maintained, 31% We are too busy, 23% |

If respondents answered “Yes” to the first question, they were then asked which parks they like to visit most. The four charts on the next page show a breakdown of most visited parks by preferred language. Results show that respondents with English as their preferred language tend to prefer recreation and community centers, while respondents with another language as their preferred language are drawn toward the regional and more nature-based parks.

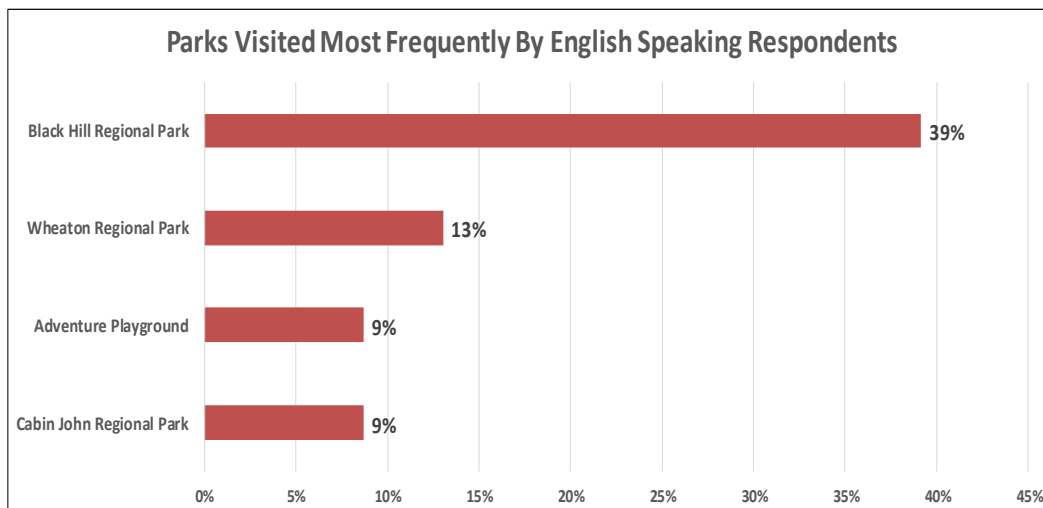
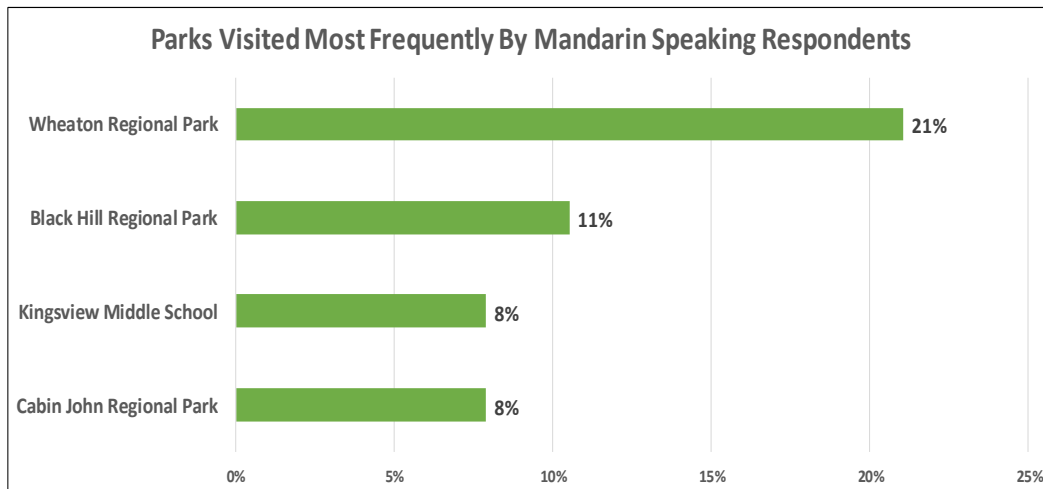
Question #2 in this survey asked respondents whether there were any park amenities or recreation programs missing in the parks that they visit, or if there is anything they would like to see added or changed to make their experience better. Results show that all respondents want more playground equipment and restrooms, while security is important to Mandarin and Hindi speakers.



QUESTION #1: PARKS VISITED MOST FREQUENTLY, BROKEN DOWN BY PREFERRED LANGUAGE

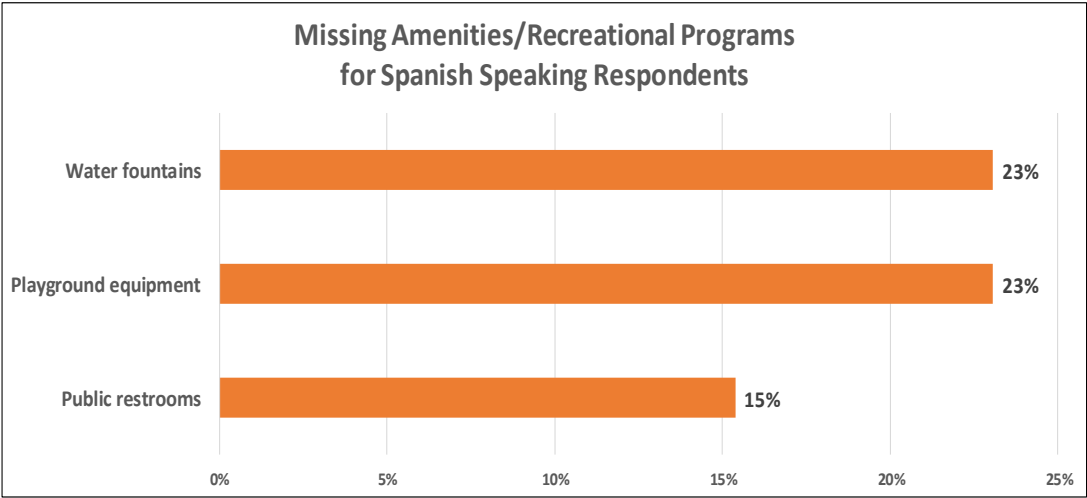
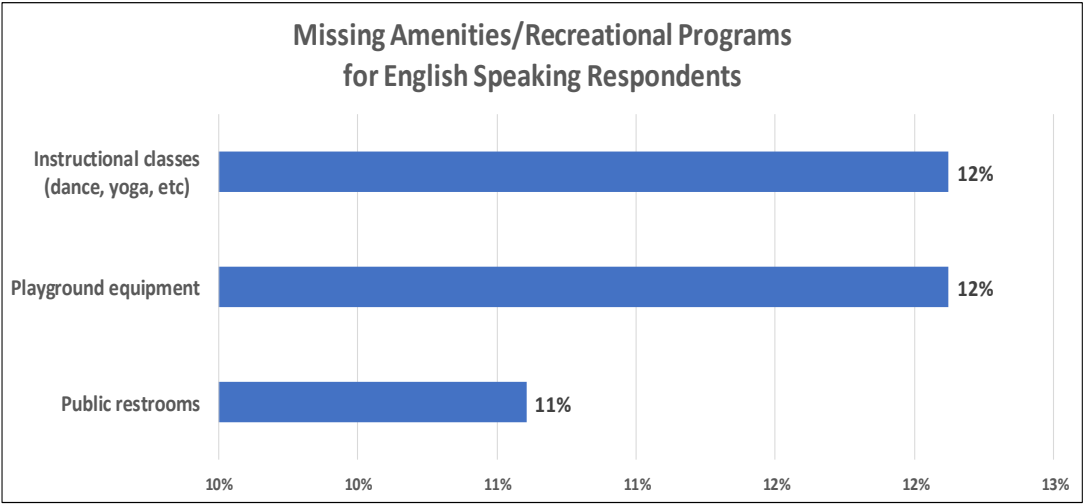


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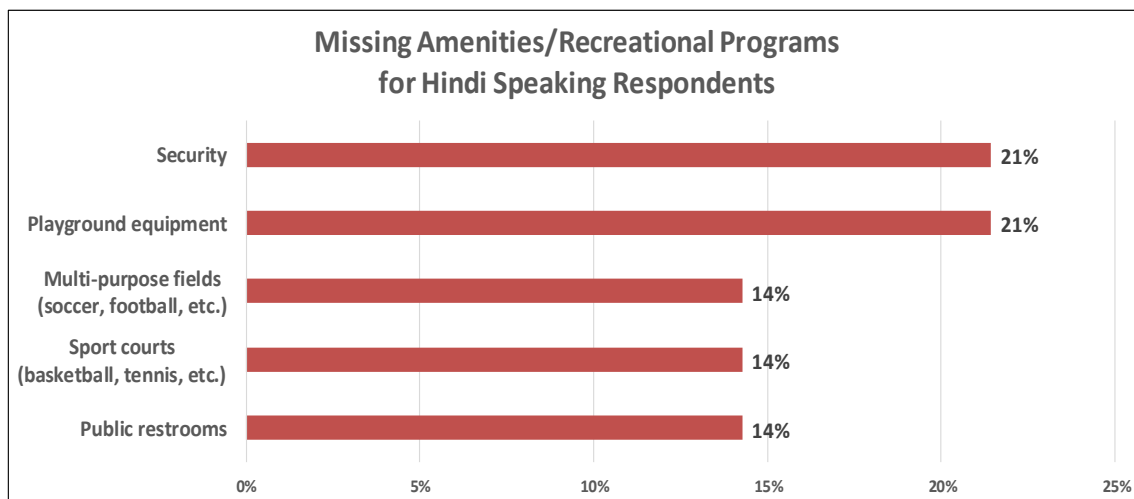
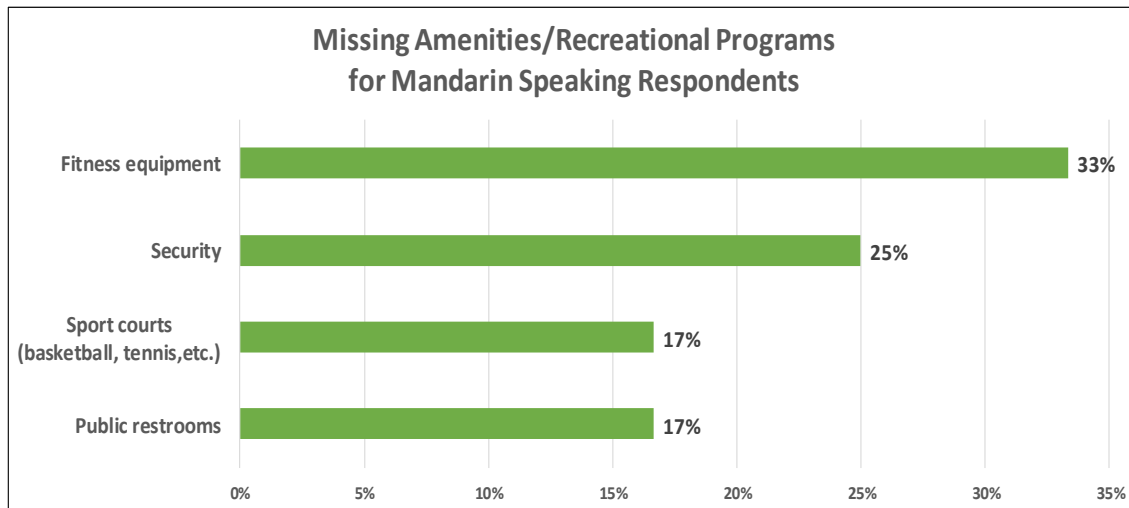




QUESTION #2: MISSING AMENITIES OR PROGRAMS, BROKEN DOWN BY PREFERRED LANGUAGE



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QUESTION #3: PREFERRED COMMUNICATION METHOD REGARDING PARK OFFERINGS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

The last question in the survey asked respondents to name their preferred communication method for future park offerings and updates. Results have been broken down by preferred language, and show that while all groups like to receive information by email, Mandarin speakers prefer social media, and Hindi speakers are as likely to prefer the website or flyers as they are email. Spanish speakers prefer email or text, and English speakers are much more likely to prefer email.

| Preferred Communication Methods | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|--------------|---------|--------|--------------|
| Primary Language | Email | Phone (Text) | Website | Flyers | Social Media |
| English | 47% | 16% | | 8% | |
| Spanish | 36% | 27% | | | |
| Mandarin | 17% | 17% | 20% | | 26% |
| Hindi | 26% | | 26% | 26% | |





SUMMARY OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTION RESPONSES

The project team pulled out key themes of the open-ended question responses. The following are major areas in which the community expressed needs and desires.

- **More...of many things.** Respondents asked for more of the following amenities, services, or programs:
 - Playgrounds and kid-friendly activities
 - Bathrooms
 - Benches, Picnic Tables, Water Fountains, and Shade
 - Water amenities and activities
 - Adventures, events and activities
 - Information
- **Cleanliness and safety.** Respondents would like to see less litter in parks, more trash cans, and more recycle bins. More lights were noted and an increase in safety measures.
- **Transportation and access.** Respondents cite a desire for better access via bicycle and public transportation, more parking, and better wheelchair accessibility.
- **Appreciation.** Respondents used the words “great,” “love,” “perfect,” and “thanks,” to describe the parks as they are today.

Detailed results from the surveys and key themes that arose out of the open-ended questions are included here. Answers to the open-ended questions are shown in the Appendix D.

RANKING OF FACILITY AND SERVICE IMPORTANCE

Respondents were asked to rank their top three activities to do in parks:

- | | |
|------------|---------------------|
| 1. Sports | 5. Events |
| 2. Trails | 6. Special Places |
| 3. Nature | 7. Gathering Spaces |
| 4. History | |

| Montgomery Parks Intercept Survey Total Results (World of Montgomery Festival & Silver Spring Tree Lighting) | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|------------------|
| Choice | SPORTS | TRAILS | NATURE | HISTORY | EVENTS | SPECIAL PLACES | GATHERING PLACES |
| 1st | 121 | 139 | 61 | 43 | 93 | 24 | 25 |
| 2nd | 53 | 98 | 101 | 50 | 94 | 32 | 26 |
| 3rd | 55 | 51 | 67 | 46 | 83 | 69 | 59 |
| Total: | 229 | 288 | 229 | 139 | 270 | 125 | 110 |

Trails, Nature, and Events were the most often ranked of Highest Importance to respondents, receiving the most 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice votes (respectively). Overall, **Trails** were acknowledged as **Most Important** to survey respondents; receiving the **highest total number** of votes. Trails were followed by Events (2nd), Sports (T-3rd), Nature (T-3rd), and History (5th) having the next highest level of importance.

DETAILED THEMES OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

MORE...OF MANY THINGS

PLAYGROUNDS

Several respondents noted the need for more playgrounds, new playground equipment, or more kid-friendly areas and activities. Specific requests ranged from updated maintenance on current equipment, a nature playground, and more modern playground equipment.

BATHROOMS

The need for additional bathrooms in or near parks was stated by several respondents, as was the need for current spaces to be better maintained.

BENCHES, PICNIC TABLES, SHADE & WATER FOUNTAINS

More park amenities such as rest areas, benches, picnic tables, shade, and water fountains were cited by several respondents as a need for the parks.

WATER AMENITIES

Water amenities and features such as ponds, swimming pools, water play areas, and other water amenities were cited as a need on several occasions by respondents.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

While some respondents cited the need for more un-programmed open space and natural areas, a higher amount of respondents asked for additional activities, events, or programs.

INFORMATION

Several respondents asked for more information from the parks in general.

CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

Littering and cleanliness of the parks was a major theme of respondents. Respondents were disappointed in the amount of litter and asked for additional trash cans and recycle bins throughout the parks. Some respondents noted smoking as a nuisance. Safety, including the addition of lights in some particular areas, was another concern.

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS

Another theme of the open-ended responses was accessibility to the parks. Respondents cite a desire for better access via bicycle and public transportation, more parking, and better wheelchair accessibility.

APPRECIATION

Many survey respondents expressed appreciation for the parks and encouraged Montgomery County Parks to “keep it up.” Respondents used the words “great,” “love,” “perfect,” and “thanks,” to describe the parks as they are today.



CHAPTER SEVEN - COMMUNITY INTERNET FORUM

7.1 OVERVIEW

Supplementary to Intercept Survey #2, Montgomery County Parks also created an internet forum in order to obtain additional community input. This forum was open for just over four weeks, spanning from February 2017 to March 2017.

The purpose of this internet forum was to reach additional community members that they weren't able to reach during the intercept surveys. Using an online forum allowed Montgomery County Parks to reach a broad range of the community. Roughly 300 residents participated in this online forum.

7.2 METHODOLOGY

An Internet forum, or message board, is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. This particular forum was accessible through the Montgomery County Parks website (<http://www.montgomeryparks.org/>). This internet discussion forum was administered by Montgomery County Parks. The forum was open to the public February 23, 2017 through March 27, 2017.

Respondents were prompted with two overarching topics; park needs and park usage. Forum participants were then allowed to leave their thoughts, opinions, concerns pertaining to these topics on the message board. Comments varied in themes, including:

PARK NEEDS DISCUSSION

- Park Accessibility
- Park Amenities
- New Park Locations
- Park Safety
- Park Condition
- Other Comments

PARK USAGE DISCUSSION

- Daily Visits
- Weekly Visits
- Monthly Visits
- Occasionally (4-8 Visits/Year)
- Rarely (1-3 Visits/Year)

7.3 FORUM RESULTS

The internet forum platform used was able to group responses by planning area from the geolocation of the comment. Planning area locations of the respondents are listed below in order of most frequent, with number to the right of the planning area name indicating frequency and length of the comment:

SPECIFIED PLANNING AREAS RESULTS

| Planning Area | | Planning Area | |
|------------------------|----|-----------------------|---|
| Silver Spring | 69 | Olney | 5 |
| Kensington/Wheaton | 45 | Upper Rock Creek | 5 |
| Cloverly | 38 | Rockville | 4 |
| Kemp Mill/Four Corners | 33 | Germantown | 3 |
| Bethesda/Chevy Chase | 28 | Gaithersburg Vicinity | 2 |
| White Oak | 15 | Lower Seneca | 2 |
| Takoma Park | 13 | Bennett | 1 |
| Aspen Hill | 9 | Clarksburg | 1 |
| North Bethesda | 8 | Goshen | 1 |
| Potomac | 8 | Patuxent | 1 |
| Fairland | 5 | | |

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Similarly, if a user noted a specific park or facility when commenting, that park or facility was noted in the forum results. The following park or facility locations were submitted:

SPECIFIED PARKS/FACILITIES

| Park/Facility | Count | Park/Facility | Count | Park/Facility | Count |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| Sligo Creek | 34 | C&O Canal NHP | 2 | Glenmont | 1 |
| Wheaton Regional Park | 19 | General Getty | 2 | Good Hope | 1 |
| Northwest Branch | 18 | Kemp Mill | 2 | Great Seneca | 1 |
| Jesup-Blair | 15 | Maydale | 2 | Hubert Humphrey | 1 |
| Rock Creek | 12 | N Four Corners | 2 | Kilgour Branch | 1 |
| Long Branch | 10 | Olney Acres | 2 | Layhill | 1 |
| Fairview | 8 | Paint Branch | 2 | Little Bennett Regional Park | 1 |
| Henson | 8 | Patuxent River | 2 | Little Falls | 1 |
| Upper Paint Branch | 8 | Rockcrest Parks | 2 | Little Seneca Reservoir | 1 |
| Spencerville | 7 | Sherwood Forest | 2 | Long Branch-Garland | 1 |
| Hopefield | 5 | Twinponds | 2 | Lynbrook | 1 |
| MRO Building | 5 | White Flint | 2 | Maiden Lane | 1 |
| Nolte | 4 | Arcola | 1 | Mill Creek | 1 |
| Battery Lane | 4 | Autre-St. Mary's Park | 1 | Opal A. Daniels | — |
| Cabin John | 4 | Brookdale | 1 | Potomac | 1 |
| Countryside | 4 | Capital Crescent Trail | 1 | Randolph Hills | 1 |
| Ellsworth | 4 | Cashell | 1 | Ray's Meadow | 1 |
| Seven Oaks | 4 | Cannon Road | 1 | Ridge Road | — |
| Wembrough | 4 | Cedar Creek | 1 | Somerset | 1 |
| Breewood | 3 | Civic Center Park | 1 | Southeast Olney | 1 |
| Norwood | 3 | Cloverly | 1 | St. Paul Park | 1 |
| Sligo-Bennington | 3 | Colt Terrace | 1 | Traville | 1 |
| Sligo-Dennis | 3 | Dale Drive | 1 | Whittier Woods | 1 |
| South Germantown | 3 | Druid Drive | 1 | Willoughby | 1 |
| Woodside | 3 | Evans Parkway | 1 | Willard Avenue | 1 |
| Acorn | 2 | Fairland | 1 | | |
| Burnt Mills | 2 | Forest Grove | 1 | | |



SUMMARY OF PARK NEEDS

The project team pulled out key themes of the open-ended question responses regarding park needs. The following are major areas in which the community expressed needs and desires in response to this survey. From the qualitative feedback, key themes have been pulled out approximately in order of frequency. There were approximately 100 total comments on this topic. A full aggregation of forum comments, grouped by comment threads, are included in Appendix E.

- **Amenities.** Additional desired amenities mentioned in the comments ranged from specific items such as signage, a dog park, ferris wheel, parking surface and fencing, to general comments such as “lack things to do” or “more amenities.” Playgrounds, slides, and swings as well as shade structures and water fountains, for humans and dogs, were also noted.
- **Access.** Forum participants were looking for both vehicular traffic solutions, including better bicycle access, as well as safer and more accessible pedestrian solutions. Also discussed was lack of access points to parks, including fencing that looked prohibitive and lack of public access near privately-held land.
- **Maintenance.** Many respondents discussed a need for better maintenance, especially with landscaping (existence of weeds), neglect of tennis and basketball courts, and general littering problems. A need for better trash cleanup and trash bins was also noted.
- **Positive Feedback.** Approximately 12% of the feedback was a positive or satisfied comment.
- **Connected/Urban Parks.** Connections to other parks within the system and preservation of urban green and open space was another theme of the comments in this section. Better bicycle and walking paths were a common theme.
- **Security.** Comments regarding additional lighting were most common, as was a general comment, “it’s not safe here!”
- **Art/History.** A few comments discussed the unique art/architectural history behind the area.
- **Wildlife.** One participant expressed the desire to leave pockets of trees as habitat for wildlife.

SUMMARY OF PARK USAGE

The project team completed a similar analysis of the park usage forum comments. Many comments were similar in nature to the park needs section, though some noted specific uses. There were approximately 200 total comments on this topic. A full aggregation of forum comments, grouped by comment threads, are included in Appendix E.

- **Positive Feedback.** Approximately 72% of the feedback was a positive and satisfied comment.
- **Amenities.** Additional desired amenities range from parkland developed into parks, to picnic tables and swings. Flood control infrastructure, more trash cans, bike racks, playground equipment, and availability of rental space were mentioned.
- **Access.** Forum participants had some positive comments specifically regarding recent access improvements, including traffic on Cedar Lane, ICC bike trail connection for safer access from Olney to Rock Creek, and the bicycle trail near Bethesda. Others cite the need for better traffic control around parks, more parking, and better trail connectivity and access.
- **Maintenance.** Feedback ranged from cleaner restrooms to better trail maintenance and the need for stream/creek cleanup or restoration. Weeds and poison ivy were also mentioned.
- **Art/History.** Participants appreciated the ability for art students to use spaces for drawing, enjoy history of the area, and want to see more collaboration for reenactments and programs.
- **Use and Value.** Some forum commenters noted that parks seem to be underused or undervalued by the public and the parks department, while others cited overuse at certain parks, especially when used for tournaments or events.
- **Urban Parks.** Converting current open space to an “energized park,” or an “urban park” were mentioned by some participants, as was better design of current space and more park space.
- **Wildlife and Nature.** Several participants remarked on the joy of seeing various wildlife during their time in the park, and spending time enjoying nature alone and in groups.

CHAPTER EIGHT - COMMUNITY CREATE PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE FUTURE SURVEY

8.1 OVERVIEW

A key component of collecting community input is allowing all areas of the community equal opportunity to voice their opinions. In order to help ensure all planning areas' voices were heard, Peak Democracy was hired to conduct an online survey. Peak democracy is a research firm that specializes in a cloud-based online citizen engagement.

This type of engagement allows for each individual respondents' zip code to be tracked/mapped (if they choose to register that information). In doing so, the Planning Team is able to identify what regions specific feedback came from and can better understanding of the needs and preferences within each zone of the county. In this case, the object was to focus on the county's various (29) planning areas. As of March 30, 2017- 10:30am EST, a total of 714 responses had been received. Of those responses, 296 respondents elected to "register" prior to taking the survey; 418 respondents chose to remain "unregistered."

8.2 METHODOLOGY

Peak Democracy is using this online engagement platform to collect information from the public regarding the future of parks and recreation within Montgomery County. The online survey took approximately 10- minutes to complete, and consisted of 13 multiple choice and free response questions regarding: usage, recreation priorities, overall perception of the parks system, current issues/challenges, missing programs/amenities, demographics, and an open-ended additional comment question.

The Create Parks and Recreation of the Future survey successfully received responses from 25 of 28 total Planning Areas. The geographic distribution of respondents are shown below.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY PLANNING AREA

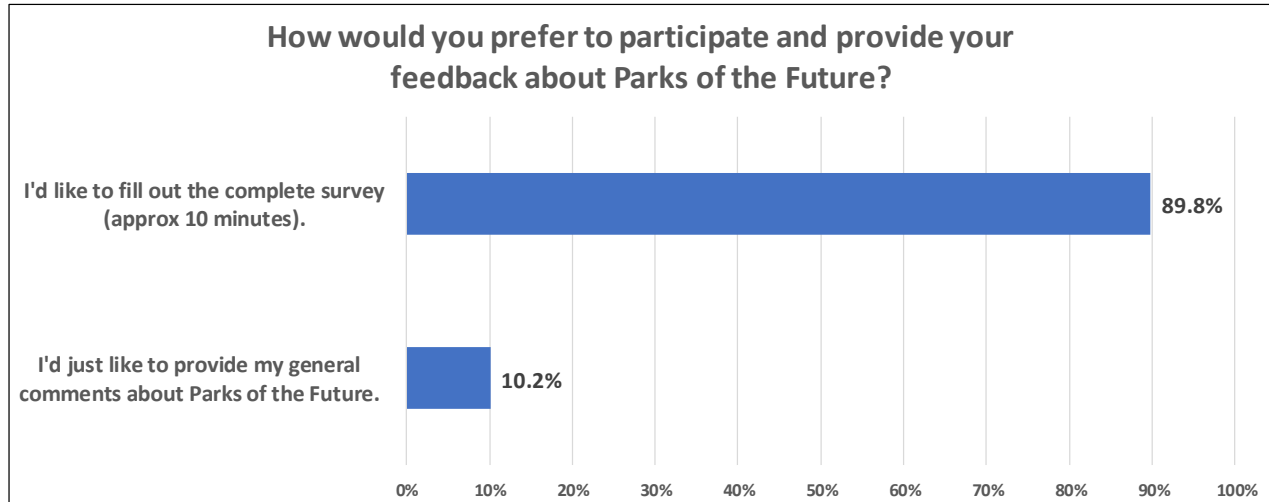
| Planning Area | Planning Area | Planning Area | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|---|
| Bethesda/Chevy Chase | 47 | Potomac | 10 | Bennett | 1 |
| Kensington/Wheaton | 47 | Germantown | 9 | Clarksburg | 1 |
| Kemp Mill/4 Corners | 26 | Gaithersburg City | 8 | Lower Seneca | 1 |
| North Bethesda | 19 | Gaithersburg Vicinity | 6 | Upper Rock Creek | 1 |
| Olney | 19 | Darnestown | 5 | Dickerson | 0 |
| White Oak | 19 | Patuxent | 4 | Martinsburg | 0 |
| Aspen Hill | 13 | Travilah | 3 | Poolesville | 0 |
| Rockville | 13 | Damascus | 2 | Outside Planning Area | 7 |
| Silver Spring | 13 | Fairland | 2 | | |
| Takoma Park | 11 | Goshen | 2 | | |



8.3 SURVEY RESULTS

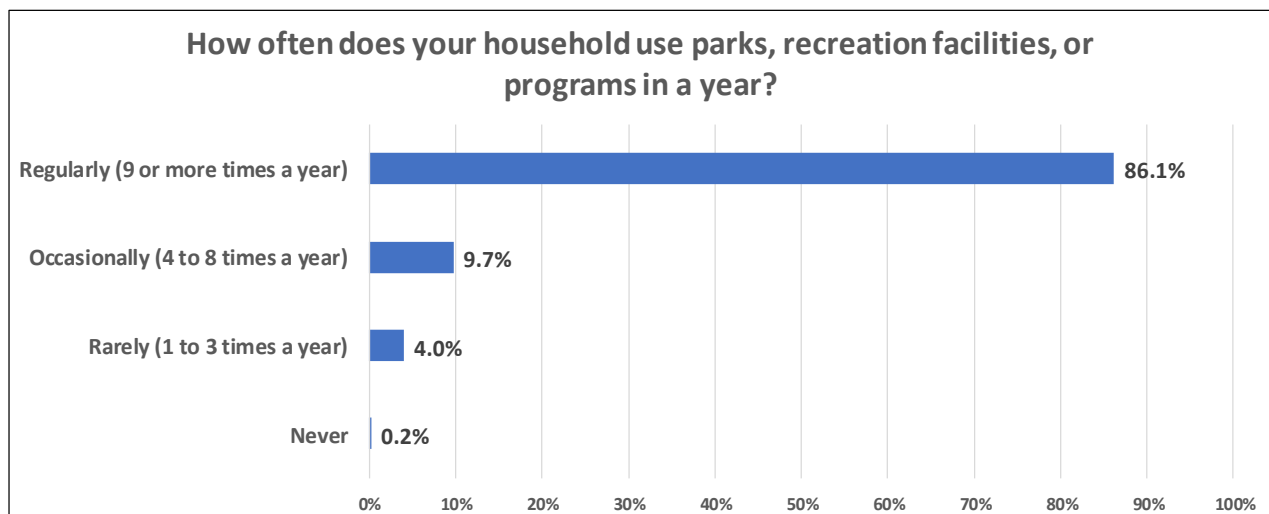
HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO PARTICIPATE AND PROVIDE YOUR FEEDBACK ABOUT PARKS OF THE FUTURE?

Approximately 90% of survey respondents indicated that they would prefer to fill out the complete survey as opposed to just providing general comments about parks of the future (10%).



HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD USE PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES, OR PROGRAMS IN A YEAR?

When asked how often does your household use parks, recreation facilities, or programs in a year 86.1% of survey participants answered Regularly- 9 or more times a year. The other 13.9% answered Occasionally- 4 to 8 times a year (9.7%), Rarely- 1 to 3 times a year (4.0%), or Never (0.2%).



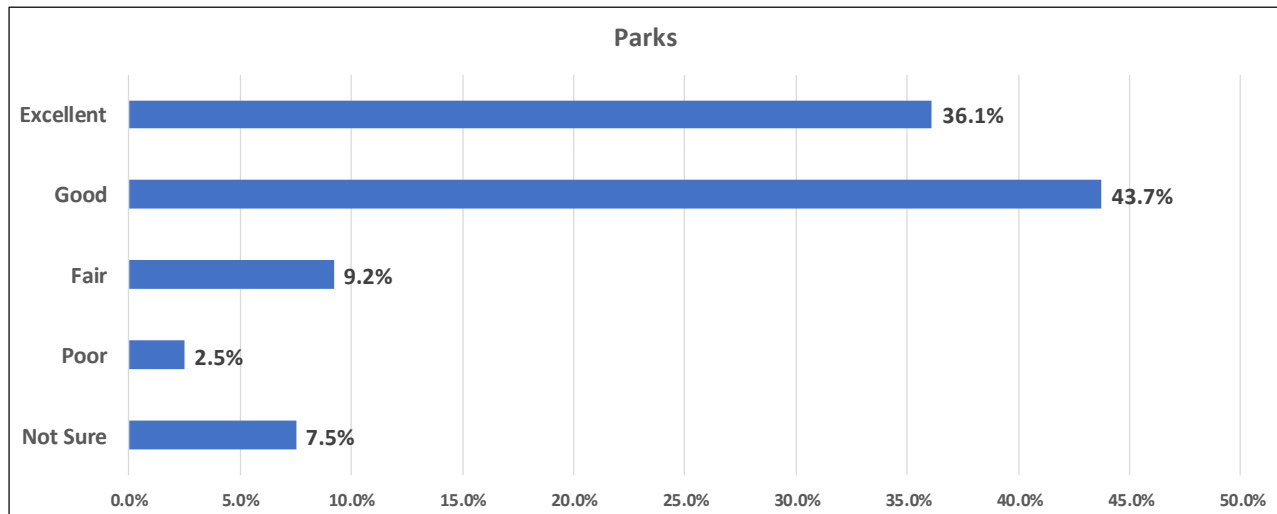
WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE TOP THREE FUNCTIONS PROVIDED BY MONTGOMERY PARKS AND THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION?

The top six (6) most frequent responses are as follows:

1. Preservation of natural resources
2. Fitness and health
3. Preservation of cultural / historic resources
4. Sports
5. Social gathering
6. Events

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE AGENCY'S PARKS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN MEETING THE COMMUNITIES NEEDS?

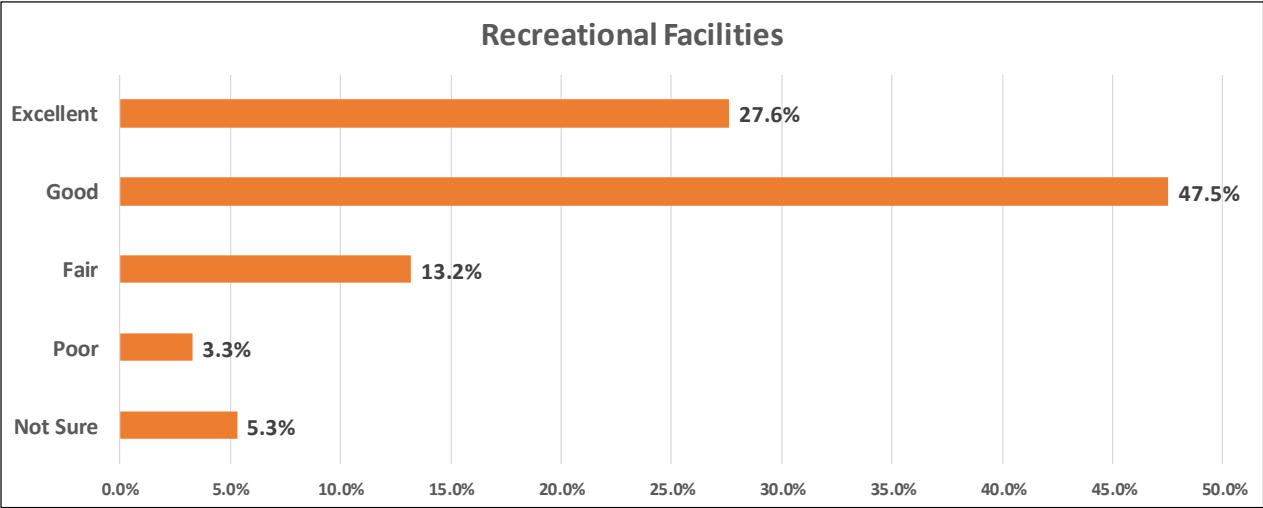
When rating parks, an estimated 79.8% percent of those surveyed gave a positive rating of either excellent (36.1%) or good (43.7%), while the other 11.7% consider the quality of parks to be in either fair (9.2%) or poor (2.5%). Roughly 7.5% indicated that they were unsure.



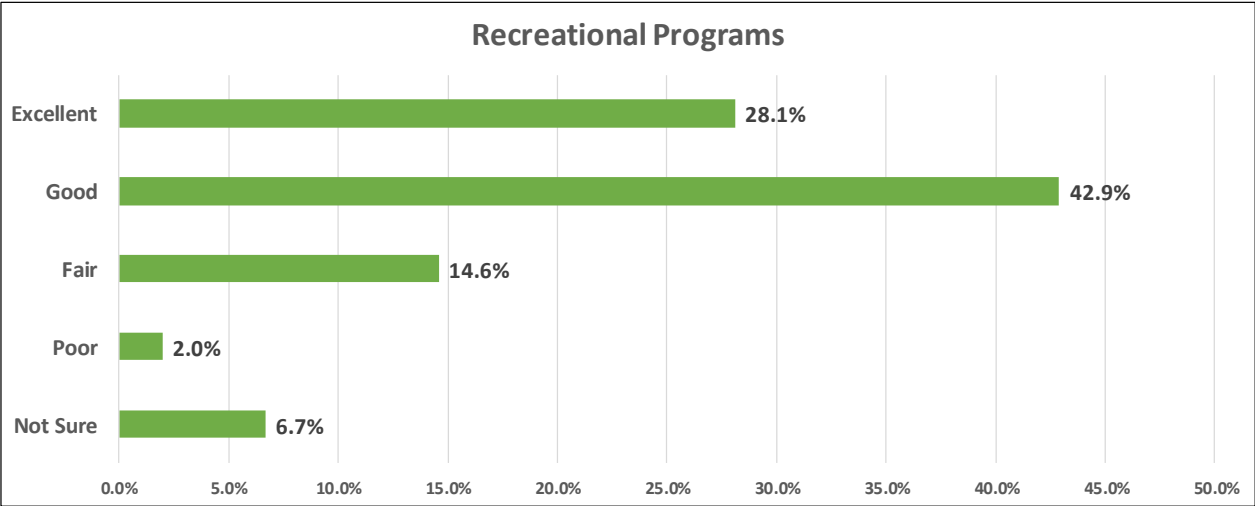


Montgomery Parks

When rating facilities, an estimated 75.1% percent of those surveyed gave a positive rating of either excellent (27.6%) or good (47.5%), while the other 16.5% consider the quality of recreation facilities to be in either fair (13.2%) or poor (3.3%). Roughly 5.3% indicated that they were unsure.



When rating programs, an estimated 71% percent of those surveyed gave a positive rating of either excellent (28.1%) or good (42.9%), while the other 16.6% consider the quality of recreation programs to be in either fair (14.6%) or poor (2.0%). Roughly 6.7% indicated that they were unsure.



ARE THERE ANY SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY THAT NEED TO BE BETTER SERVED BY MONTGOMERY PARKS AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION? IF SO, WHO ARE THEY AND HOW CAN THEY BE BETTER SERVED?

The following four questions prompted the participant to provide an open-ended response. Responses are grouped in the form of a word cloud, which uses size, shade, and weight of font to visually represent frequency a particular word or phrase was used. These word clouds are designed for the visually impaired to read as well as the general public. Full open-ended question results are located in Appendix F.

need outdoor pickleball courts tennis Seniors Montgomery County could they available use growing additional needs better senior who play over out center kids population Players great just While all older were other them do equipment community time More One area access also areas only up Dedicated new sport without facilities very which like see some most sports how parks especially near communities those t even young activities trails Bethesda recreation residents good s from donprograms Potomac know so walk space please Families children people fields playground open natural nature walking Teens far Park think Urban centers been green school Downtown silver spring dog much public Wheaton Regional dogs than Horse soccer

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES / CHALLENGES FACING MONTGOMERY PARKS AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

More pickleball courts programs needs Upkeep parks facilities Montgomery County use who 1 Population 2 Budget 3 people growing aging all community moneyresources up funding Maintaining existing new park recreation Maintenance t especially enough natural current preservation trash areas land them green invasive speciesimportant residents need also open space developers public from fields Preserving spaces infrastructure getting Keeping so maintain they make development Lack

WHAT AMENITIES, PROGRAMS OR EXPERIENCES ARE MISSING THAT WOULD BETTER SUPPORT YOUR RECREATION NEEDS THAT WE SHOULD BE PLANNING FOR IN THE FUTURE?

Outdoor pickleball courts tennis which better county summer kids so needs need facilities play sport very Montgomery other existing could used sports One park indoorschool s See they Center some more centers all local help parks up out Love like also recreation



Montgomery Parks

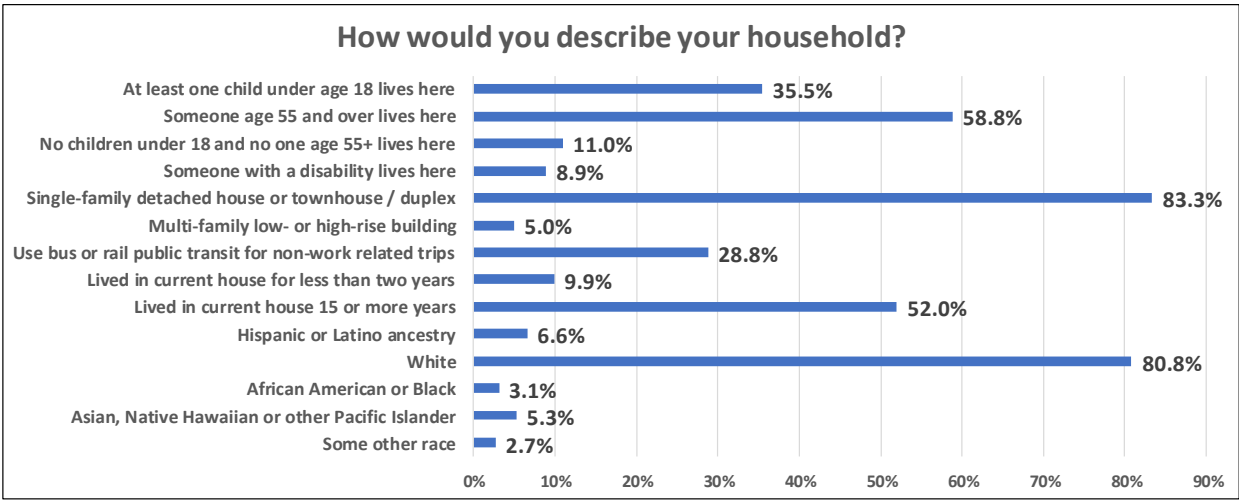
children programs public community use new people from areas adultsspace just especially bike
paths make area fields nature natural trails dog t events well Trail gardens

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS TO HELP
MONTGOMERY PARKS AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION STAFF PLAN FOR
THE COUNTY'S FUTURE PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES OR PROGRAMS?

Provide Pickleball tennis courts County Growing playing need outdoor SO
please new use sport community space court more equipment verypeople all Branch
Trail think Do public needs dedicated only lines play Potomac one live Centers facilities like see
some parks Wheaton game seniors been used couldjust make they both sports Recreation
ball over players its where which Also Montgomery high them Thank area s d especially park
into those was years from other anysummer available Bethesda Love what families up great most
important programs Center kids after work number nice EVERY private time residents help keep enjoy
well wonderful greenout Brookside Gardens fields support development land trees nature trails rugby
facility areas neighborhood dogs Creek children staff who SCHOOL field Don t riding Horse

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

When asked to describe their households, a majority of survey participants answered: Single-family detached house or townhouse/duplex (83.3%), White (80.8%), Someone age 55 and over lives here (58.8%), and Lived in current house 15 or more years.



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PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR ZIP CODE HERE TO HELP US TO DETERMINE WHERE FACILITIES AND SERVICES ARE NEEDED.

Of the 714 survey respondents, 626 provided a zip code.

ZIP CODES OF FORUM PARTICIPANTS

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|----|-------|----|-------|---|-------|---|
| 20902 | 56 | 20832 | 20 | 20886 | 8 | 20860 | 1 |
| 20901 | 47 | 20853 | 16 | 20833 | 7 | 20861 | 1 |
| 20817 | 42 | 20874 | 16 | 20872 | 6 | 20873 | 1 |
| 20906 | 41 | 20903 | 11 | 20876 | 6 | 20950 | 1 |
| 20904 | 36 | 20905 | 10 | 20877 | 6 | 20954 | 1 |
| 20910 | 34 | 20850 | 9 | 20879 | 6 | 21771 | 1 |
| 20815 | 33 | 20851 | 9 | 20841 | 4 | 21773 | 1 |
| 20852 | 32 | 20871 | 9 | 20868 | 2 | 21797 | 1 |
| 20878 | 31 | 20882 | 9 | 20007 | 1 | 29095 | 1 |
| 20814 | 30 | 20912 | 9 | 20008 | 1 | 29879 | 1 |
| 20854 | 27 | 20816 | 8 | 20818 | 1 | | |
| 20895 | 24 | 20855 | 8 | 20838 | 1 | | |



CHAPTER NINE - PRIORITY RANKINGS

9.1 FACILITY / AMENITY PRIORITY RANKING

The purpose of the Facility Priority Rankings is to provide a prioritized list of facility/amenity needs for the community served by the Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Department.

This rankings model evaluated both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data includes the statistically valid community survey, which asked residents to list unmet needs and rank their importance. Qualitative data includes resident feedback obtained in community input, such as through the intercept surveys and focus groups, as well as demographics and trends.

A weighted scoring system was used to determine the priorities for parks and recreation facilities/amenities. For instance, as noted below, a weighted value of 3 for the Unmet Desires means that out of a total of 100%, unmet needs make up 30% of the total score. Similarly, importance-ranking also makes up 30%, while Consultant Evaluation (driven by public input and overall assessments) makes up 40% of the total score, thus totaling 100%.

This scoring system considers the following:

- Community Survey
 - **Unmet needs for facilities-** This is used as a factor from the total number of households mentioning whether they have a need for a facility and the extent to which their need for facilities has been met. Survey participants were asked to identify this for 23 different facilities/ amenities.
 - **Importance ranking for facilities-** This is used as a factor from the importance allocated to a facility by the community. Each respondent was asked to identify the top four most important facilities.
- Consultant Evaluation
 - Factor derived from the consultant's evaluation of facility priority based on community input (Intercept Survey #1, Key Stakeholder Focus Groups and Interviews, Intercept Survey #2, Statistically Valid Survey, and Market Definition of Estimated Participation Rates and Frequencies).

The weighted scores were as follows:

- 60% from the statistically valid community survey results
- 40% from consultant evaluation using community focus groups and public meetings, demographic and trends data, and levels of service

These weighted scores were then summed to provide an overall score and priority ranking for the system as a whole. The results of the priority ranking were tabulated into three categories: High Priority (top third), Medium Priority (middle third) and Low Priority (bottom third).

The combined total of the weighted scores for Community Unmet Needs, Community Importance, and Consultant Evaluation is the total score based on which the Facility/Amenity Priority is determined.

9.2 OVERALL FACILITY / AMENITY PRIORITY RANKINGS

As observed below, Paved multi-use trails (walking, biking), Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horseback riding), Natural areas & wildlife habitats, Public gardens, and park shelters & picnic areas are the top five highest facility / amenity priorities county-wide.

| FACILITY/AMENITY | OVERALL RANKING |
|--|-----------------|
| Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) | 1 |
| Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horseback riding) | 2 |
| Natural areas & wildlife habitats | 3 |
| Public gardens | 4 |
| Park shelters & picnic areas | 5 |
| Nature center with outdoor educational areas | 6 |
| Playgrounds | 7 |
| Flexible lawn areas for events & festivals, pickup sports, etc. | 8 |
| Museums & history centers | 9 |
| Community gardens | 10 |
| Dog parks | 11 |
| Rectangular sports fields (soccer, football, Ultimate Frisbee, etc.) | 12 |
| Nature play spaces | 13 |
| Historic & cultural sites | 14 |
| Tennis courts | 15 |
| Rentable space (for formal events) | 16 |
| Basketball courts | 17 |
| Diamond athletic fields (baseball, softball, kickball, etc.) | 18 |
| Volleyball courts | 19 |
| Courts (pickleball, handball, bocce, etc.) | 20 |
| Skate parks | 21 |
| Paved plazas | 22 |
| Cricket fields | 23 |



9.3 PRIORITY RANKINGS BY LANGUAGE

The following table depicts the facility / amenity priority rankings based on whether or not English is the primary language spoken in the household. When analyzing survey responses by language, the results closely resembled the overall priority rankings. The non-English speaking group exhibited the most notable deviation, as this segment overvalued Rectangular sports fields compared to the overall priority rankings.

| | English - Yes | English - No |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) | 1 | 2 |
| Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horseback riding) | 2 | 1 |
| Natural areas & wildlife habitats | 3 | 5 |
| Public gardens | 4 | 7 |
| Park shelters & picnic areas | 5 | 3 |
| Nature center with outdoor educational areas | 6 | 6 |
| Playgrounds | 9 | 4 |
| Flexible lawn areas for events & festivals, pickup sports, etc. | 7 | 9 |
| Museums & history centers | 8 | 10 |
| Community gardens | 10 | 12 |
| Dog parks | 11 | 15 |
| Rectangular sports fields (soccer, football, Ultimate Frisbee, etc.) | 12 | 8 |
| Nature play spaces | 13 | 11 |
| Historic & cultural sites | 14 | 13 |
| Tennis courts | 15 | 16 |
| Rentable space (for formal events) | 16 | 14 |
| Basketball courts | 17 | 17 |
| Diamond athletic fields (baseball, softball, kickball, etc.) | 18 | 22 |
| Volleyball courts | 20 | 20 |
| Courts (pickleball, handball, bocce, etc.) | 19 | 23 |
| Skate parks | 21 | 19 |
| Paved plazas | 22 | 18 |
| Cricket fields | 23 | 21 |
| | | |

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9.4 PRIORITY RANKINGS BY RACE

Facility/amenity priority rankings results based on race were rather diverse. With the White, African American, and Asian segments being somewhat similar to the overall rankings. The American Indian/Alaskan Native and Other segments varied a great deal from the overall priority rankings. The American Indian/Alaskan Native population indicated a higher preference for Community gardens and Rentable space (for formal events) but were less interested in Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) and Park shelters & picnic areas. The Other category indicated a higher preference for Community gardens and Nature play spaces but were less interested in Nature center with outdoor educational areas and Rectangular sports fields.

| | White | African American or Black | Asian, NH, Other Pacific | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Other |
|--|-------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 1 |
| Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horseback riding) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Natural areas & wildlife habitats | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| Public gardens | 4 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 6 |
| Park shelters & picnic areas | 9 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 3 |
| Nature center with outdoor educational areas | 5 | 7 | 7 | 1 | 14 |
| Playgrounds | 6 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 5 |
| Flexible lawn areas for events & festivals, pickup sports, etc. | 8 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 12 |
| Museums & history centers | 7 | 10 | 9 | 11 | 9 |
| Community gardens | 10 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 4 |
| Dog parks | 11 | 13 | 15 | 12 | 10 |
| Rectangular sports fields (soccer, football, Ultimate Frisbee, etc.) | 12 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Nature play spaces | 13 | 17 | 12 | 14 | 7 |
| Historic & cultural sites | 14 | 11 | 17 | 13 | 11 |
| Tennis courts | 15 | 14 | 16 | 15 | 18 |
| Rentable space (for formal events) | 16 | 15 | 11 | 6 | 15 |
| Basketball courts | 17 | 16 | 13 | 15 | 13 |
| Diamond athletic fields (baseball, softball, kickball, etc.) | 18 | 23 | 23 | 18 | 17 |
| Volleyball courts | 21 | 18 | 21 | 18 | 20 |
| Courts (pickleball, handball, bocce, etc.) | 19 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 22 |
| Skate parks | 20 | 20 | 20 | 18 | 21 |
| Paved plazas | 22 | 21 | 22 | 18 | 19 |
| Cricket fields | 23 | 22 | 18 | 18 | 22 |



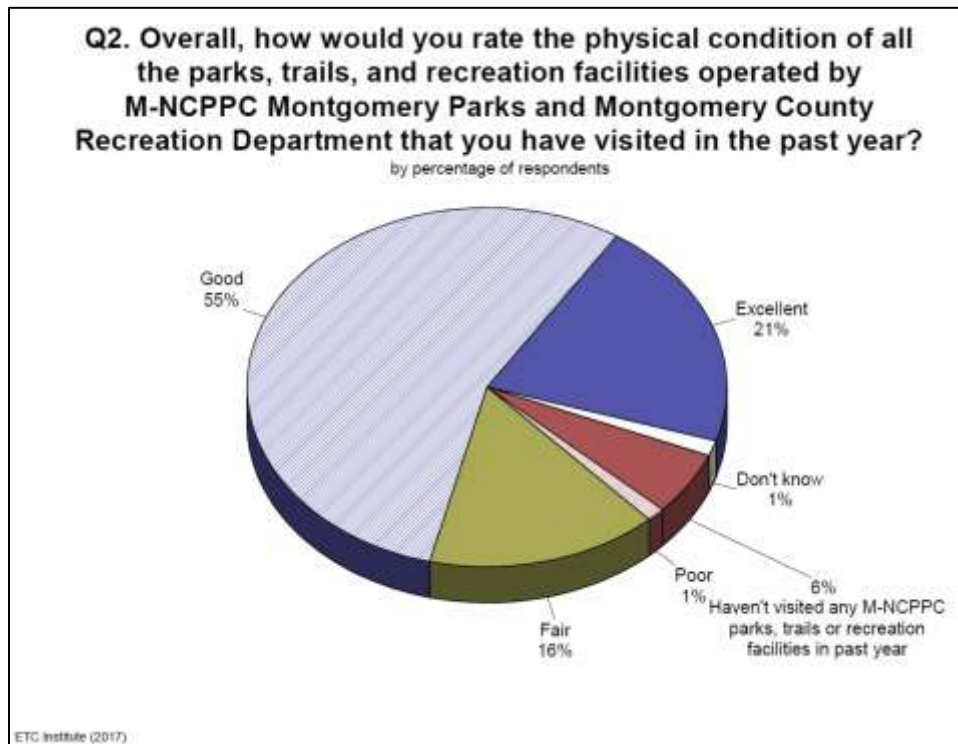
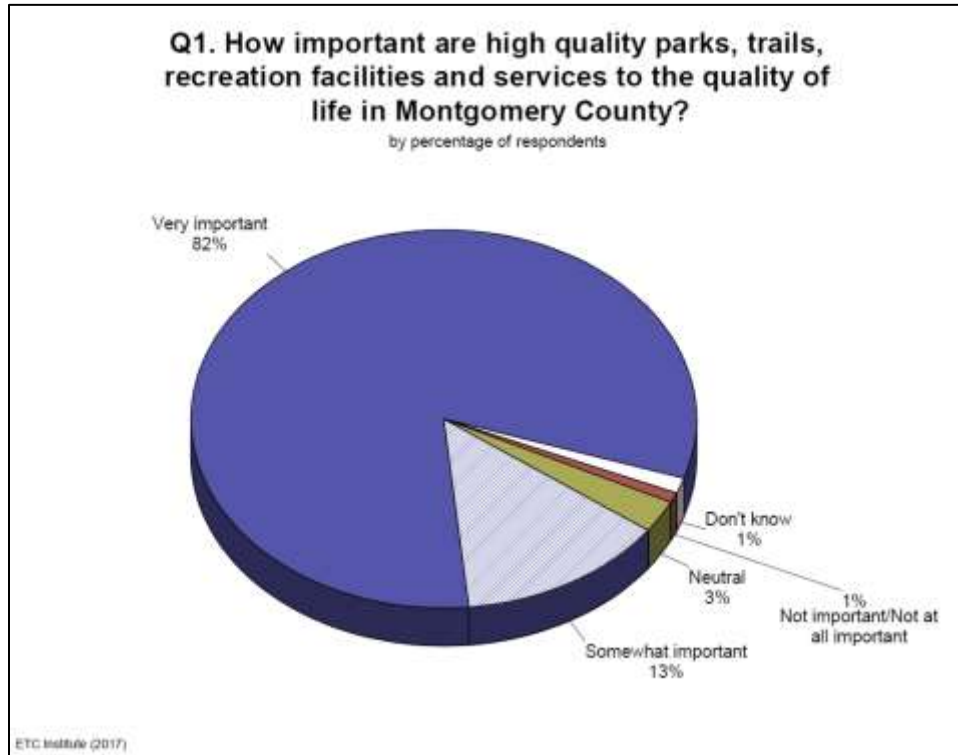
9.5 PRIORITY RANKINGS BY ETHNICITY

The following table depicts the facility / amenity priority rankings based on respondent Hispanic/Latino origin. When analyzing survey responses by ethnicity, the results closely resembled the overall priority rankings.

| | Hispanic |
|--|----------|
| Paved, multi-use trails (walking, biking) | 1 |
| Natural surface trails (walking, biking, horseback riding) | 2 |
| Natural areas & wildlife habitats | 3 |
| Public gardens | 7 |
| Park shelters & picnic areas | 5 |
| Nature center with outdoor educational areas | 6 |
| Playgrounds | 4 |
| Flexible lawn areas for events & festivals, pickup sports, etc. | 11 |
| Museums & history centers | 8 |
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| Cricket fields | 23 |

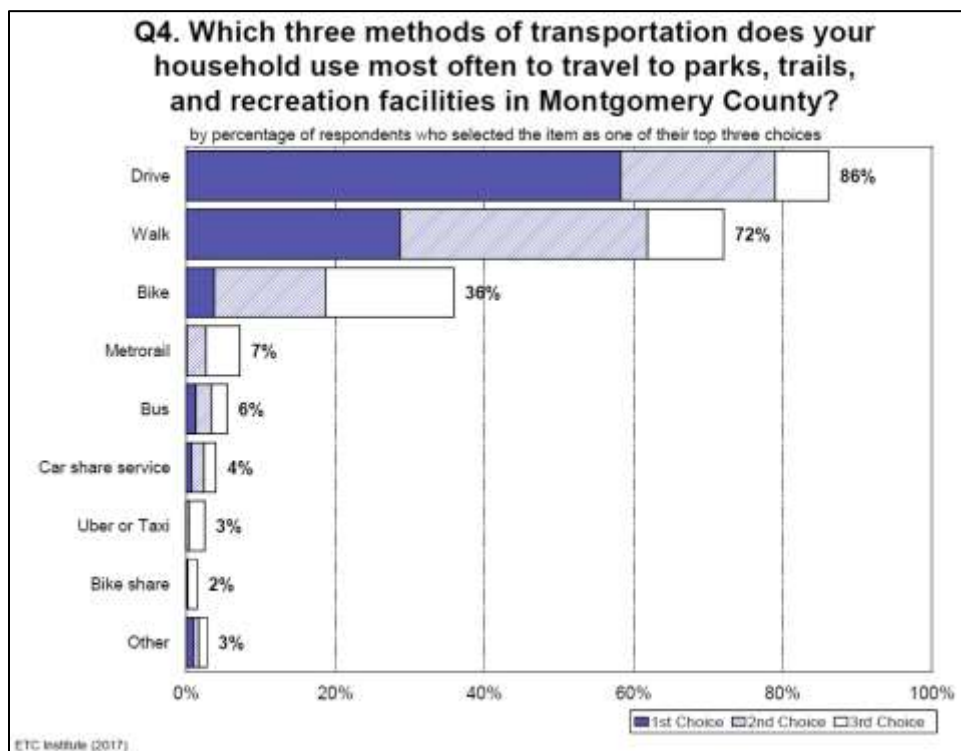
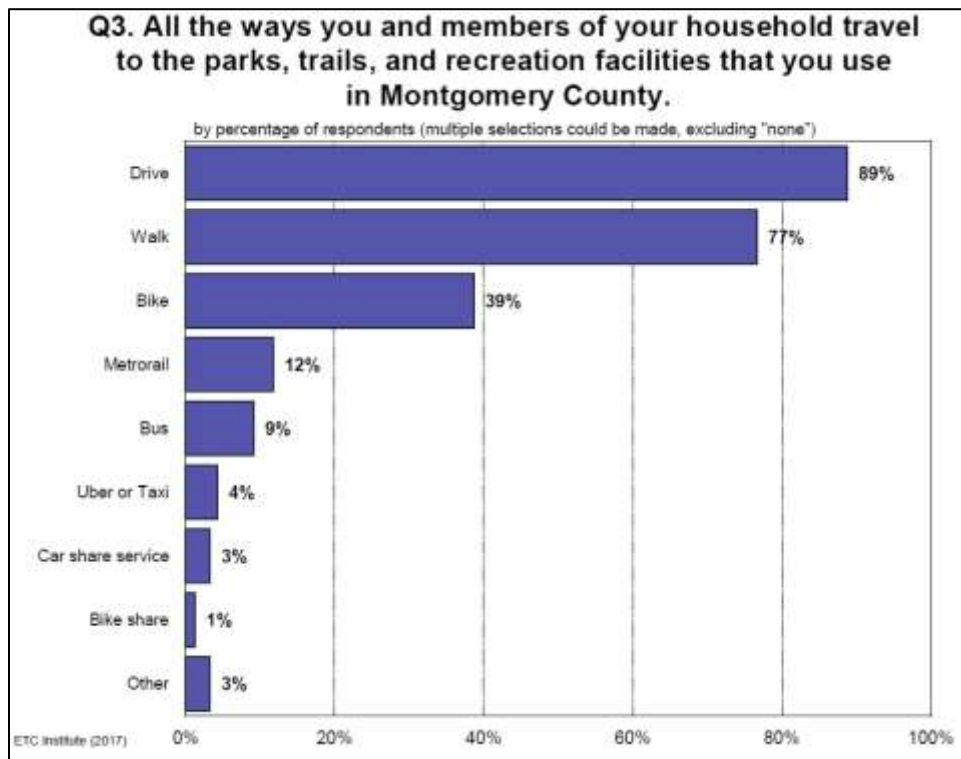
CHAPTER TEN - APPENDICES

10.1 APPENDIX A- FULL STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY RESULTS

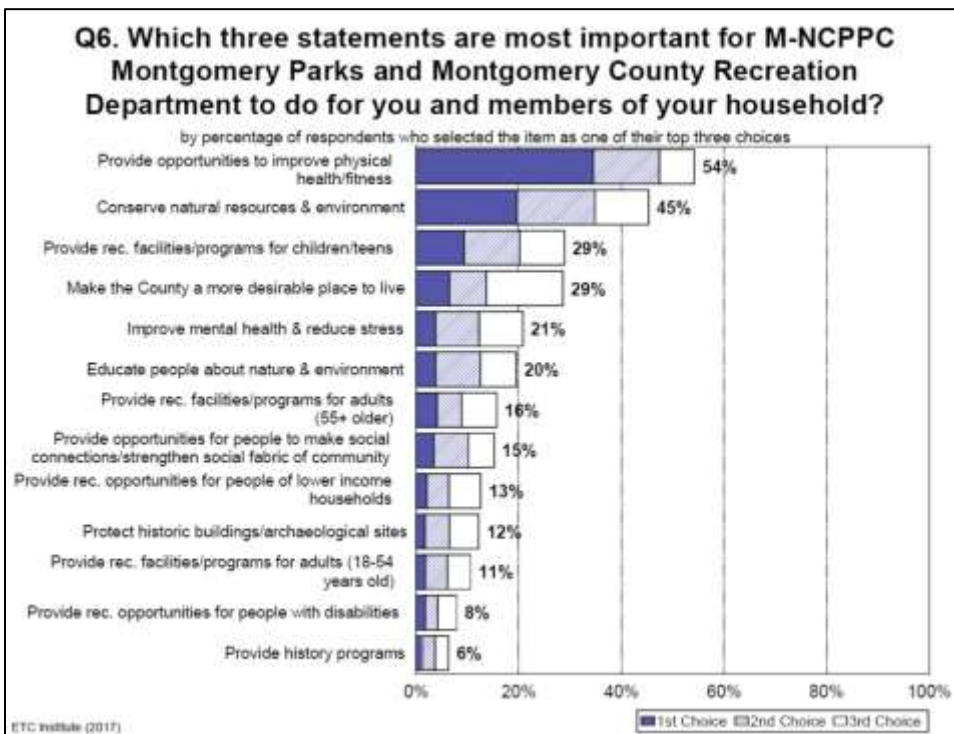
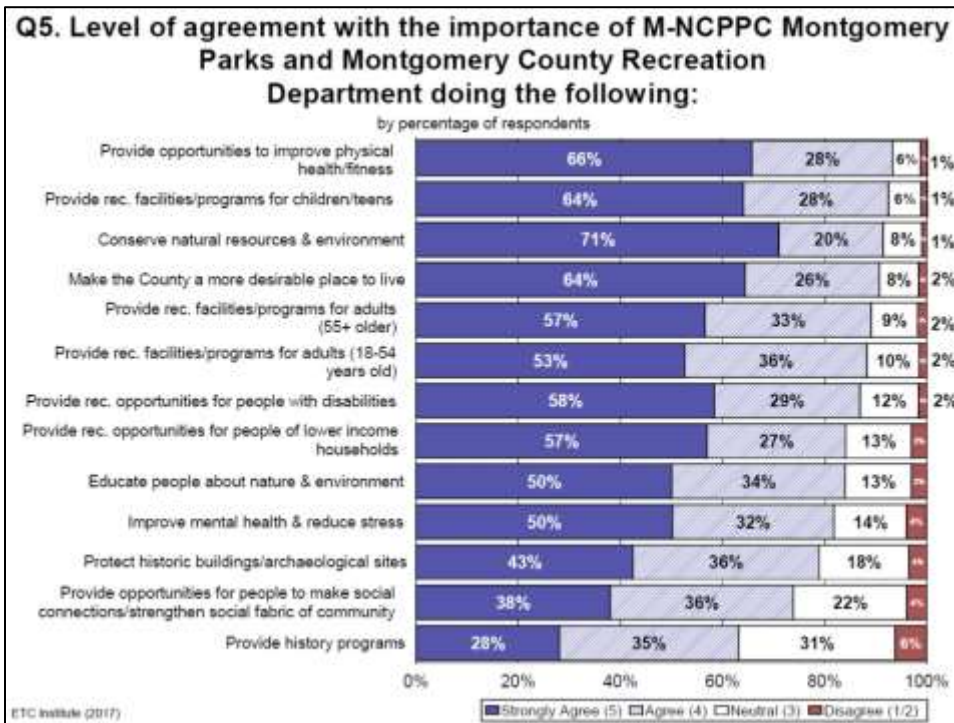




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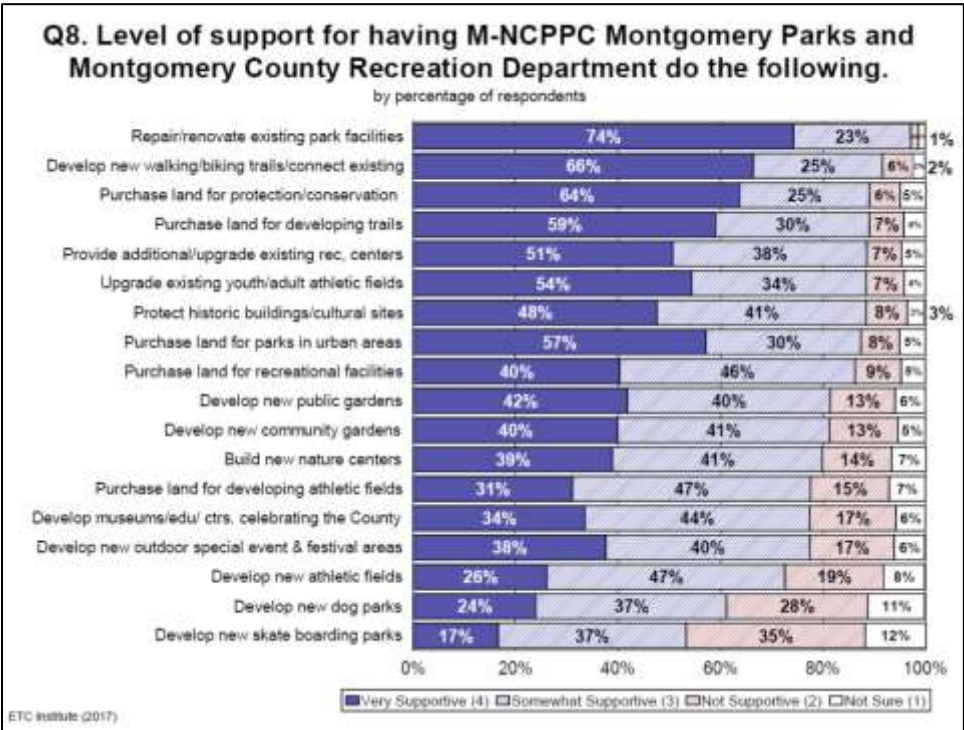
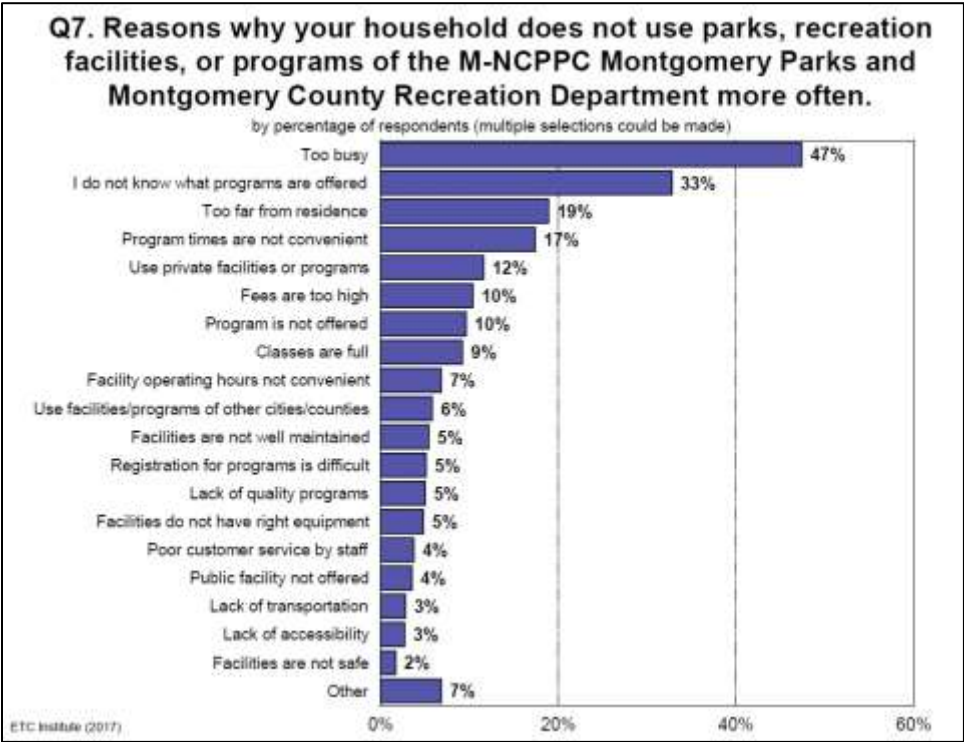


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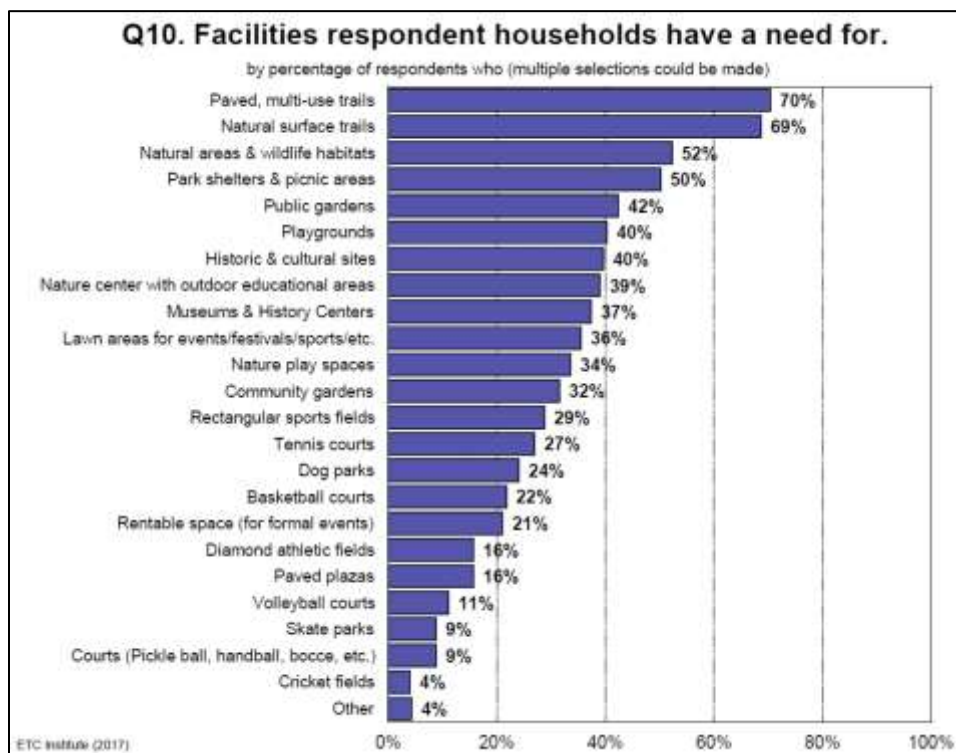
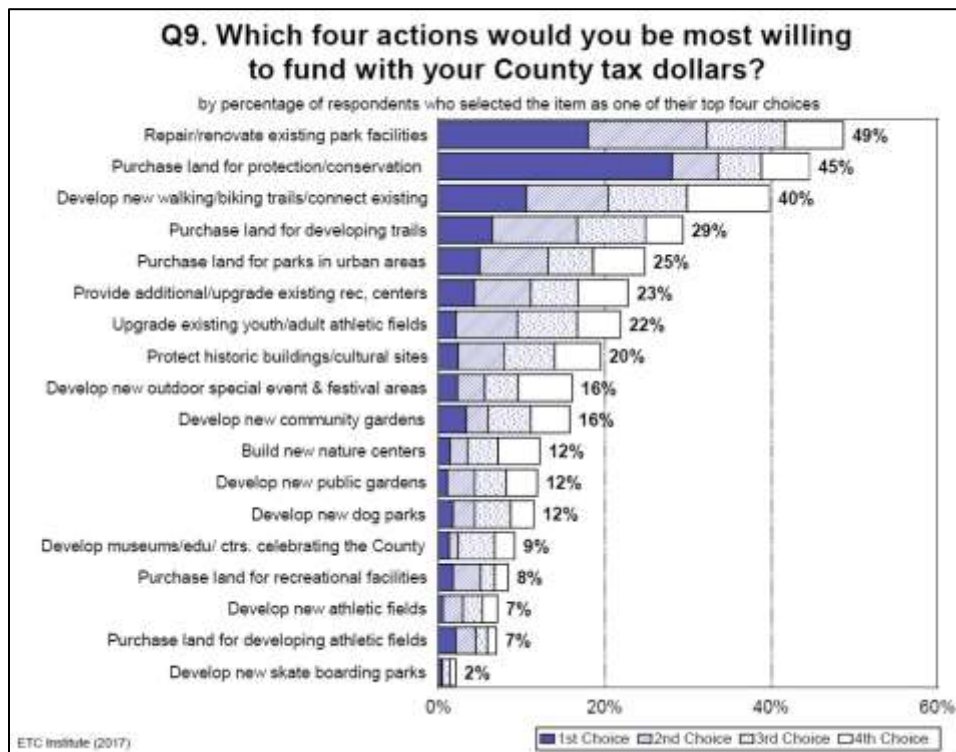




Montgomery Parks

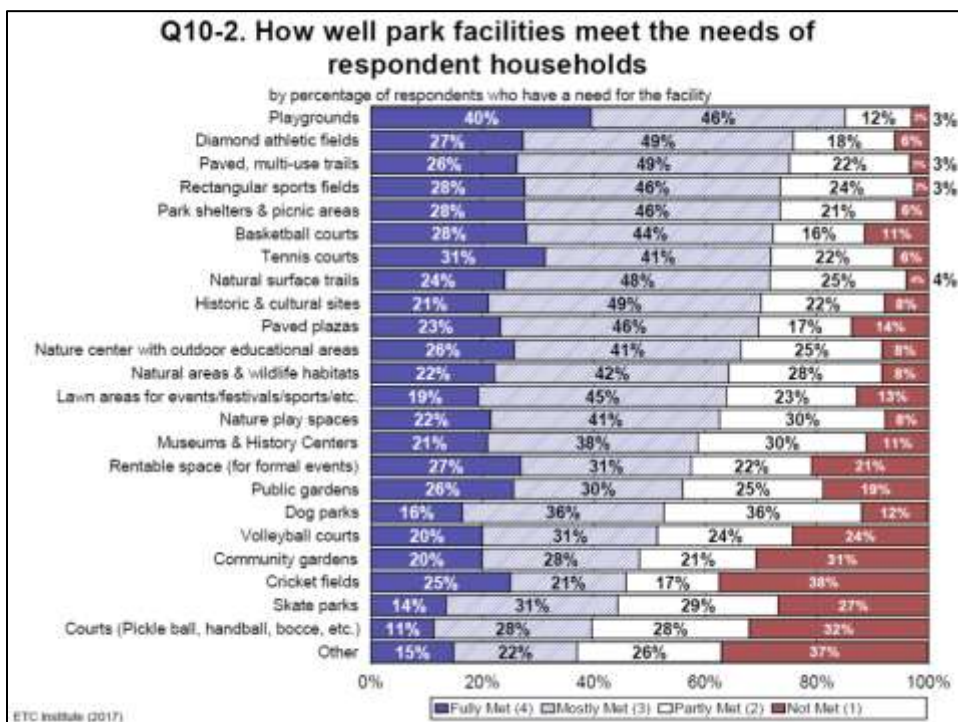
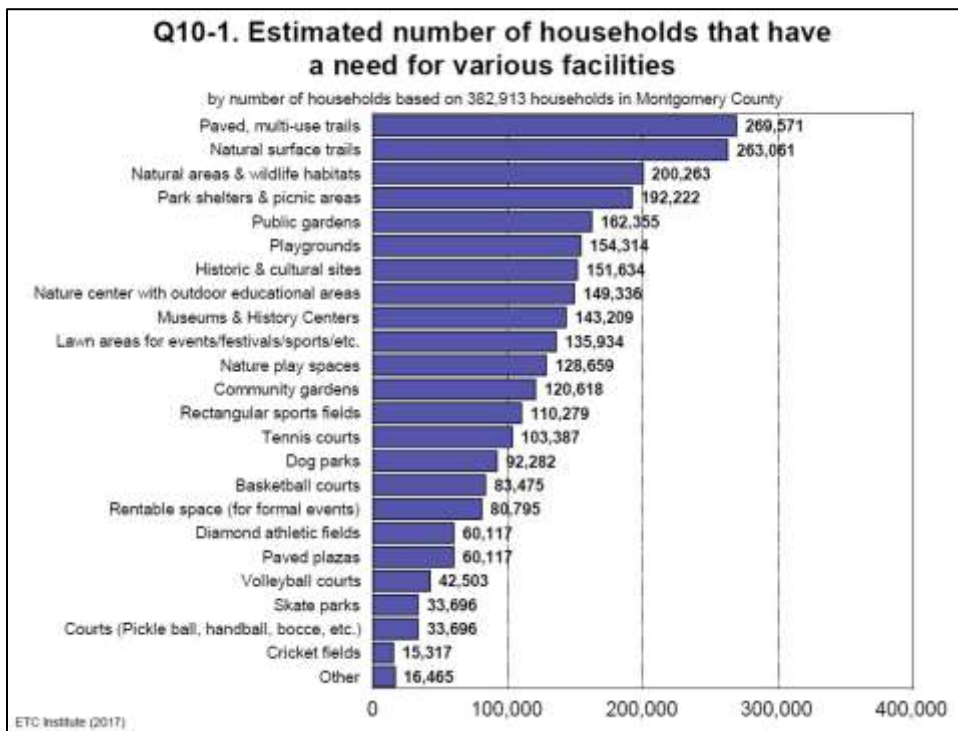


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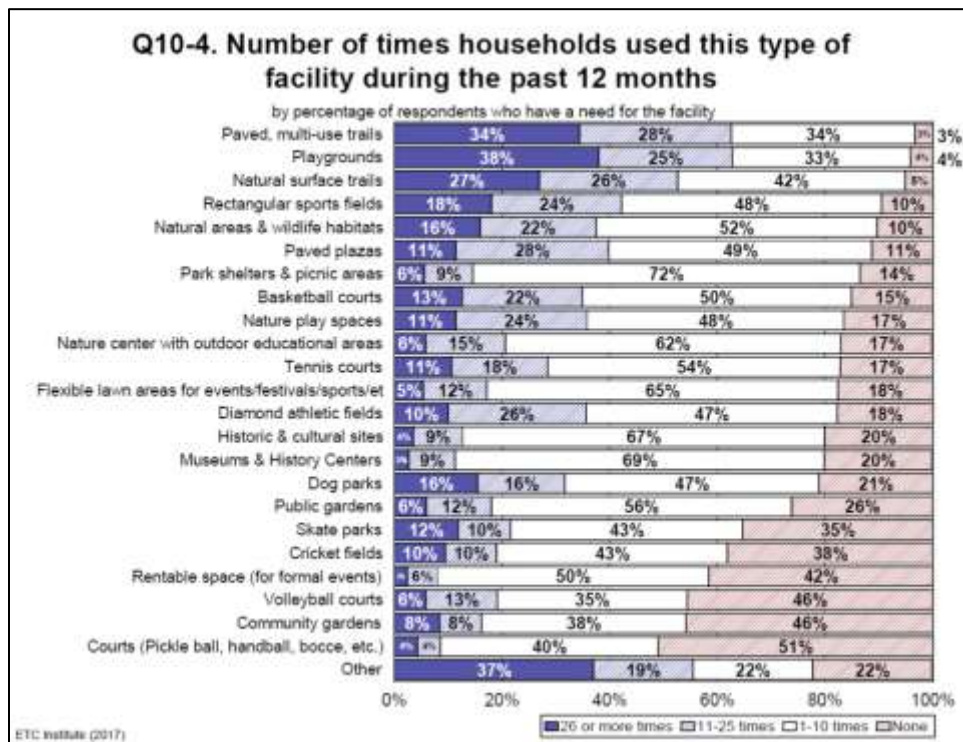
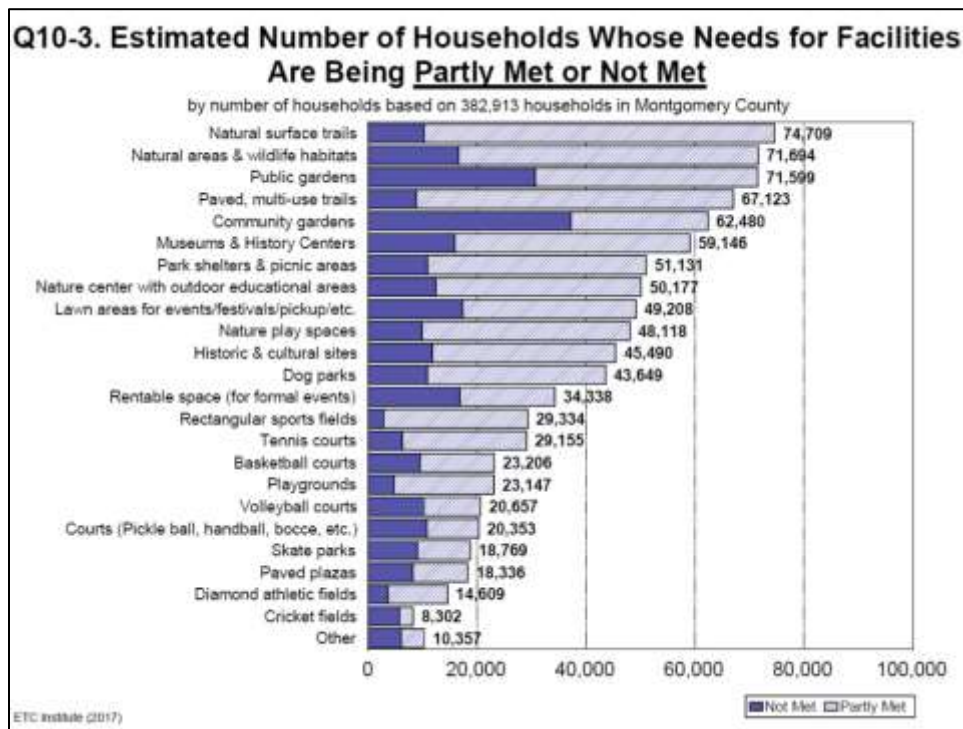




Montgomery Parks



Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Draft Report

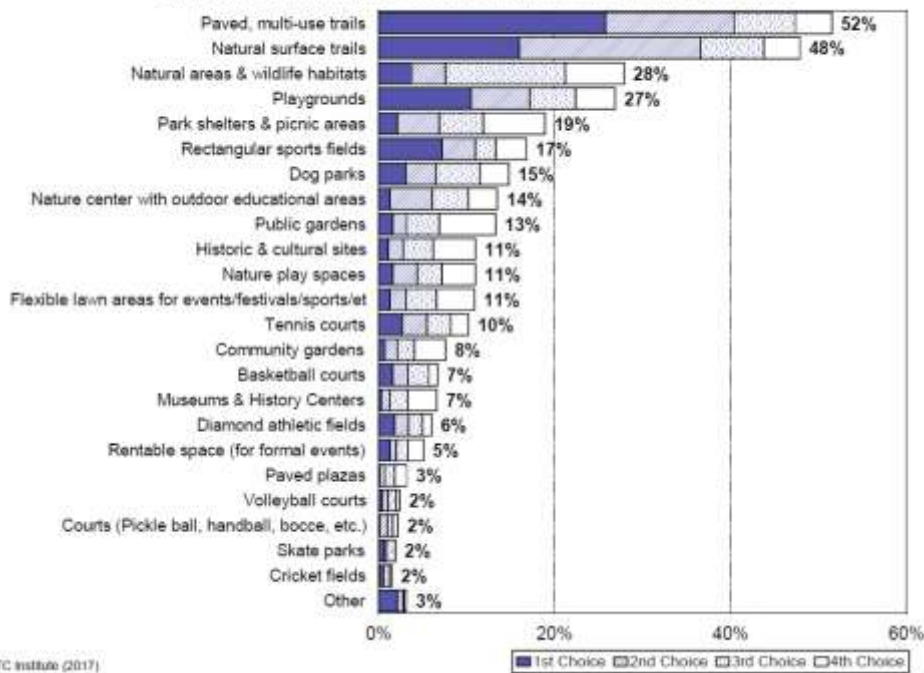




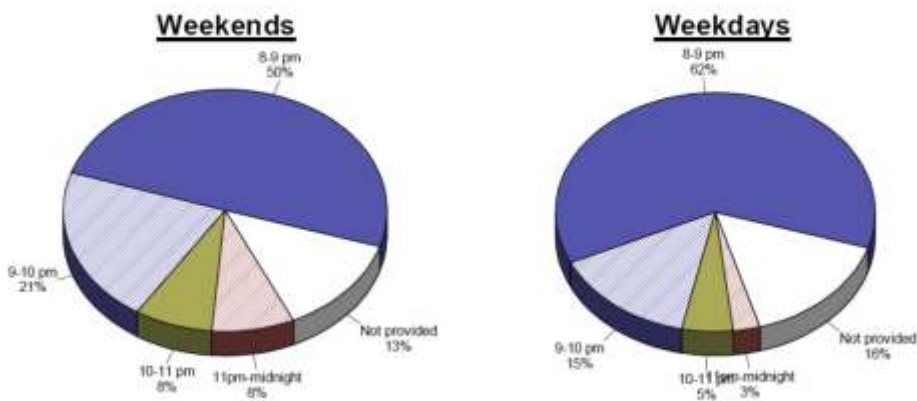
Montgomery Parks

Q11. Which four facilities are most important to your household?

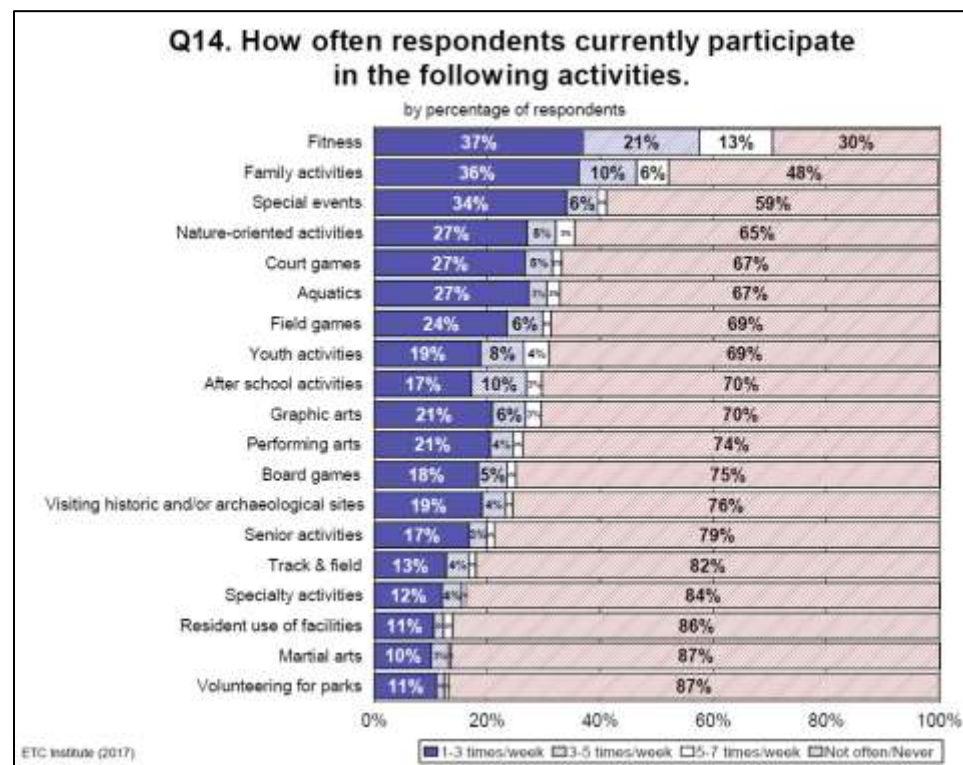
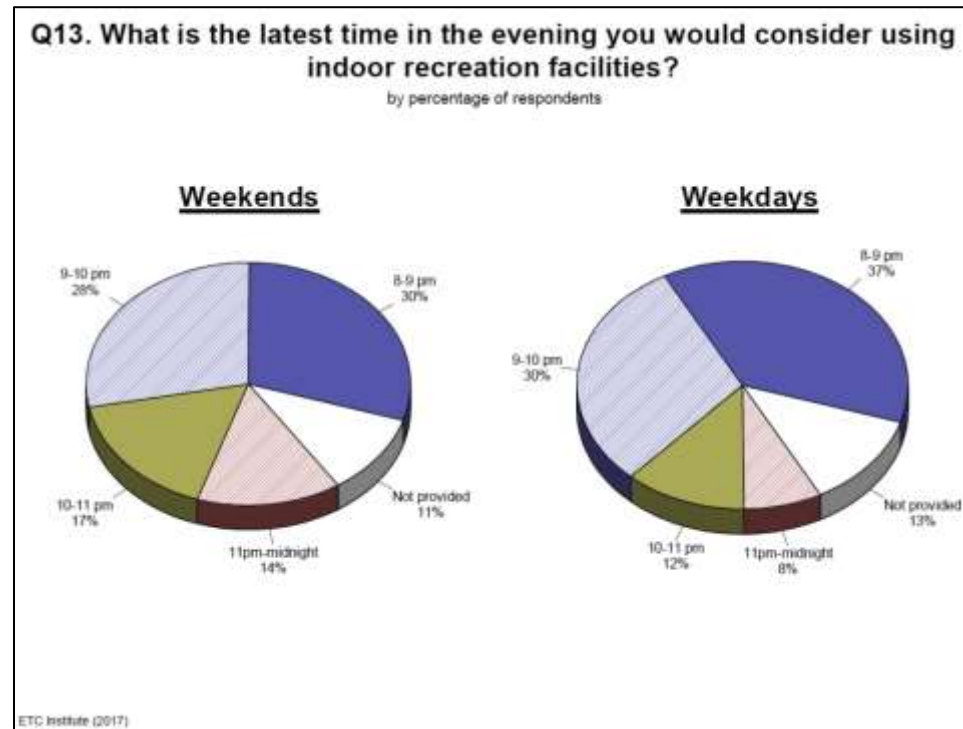
by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices

**Q12. What is the latest time in the evening you would consider using outdoor recreation facilities?**

by percentage of respondents



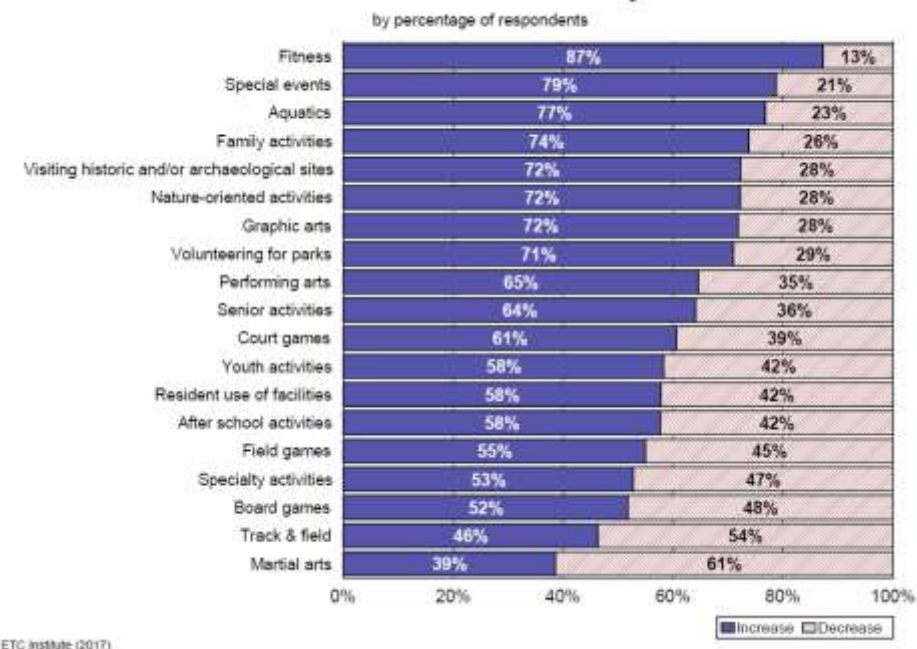
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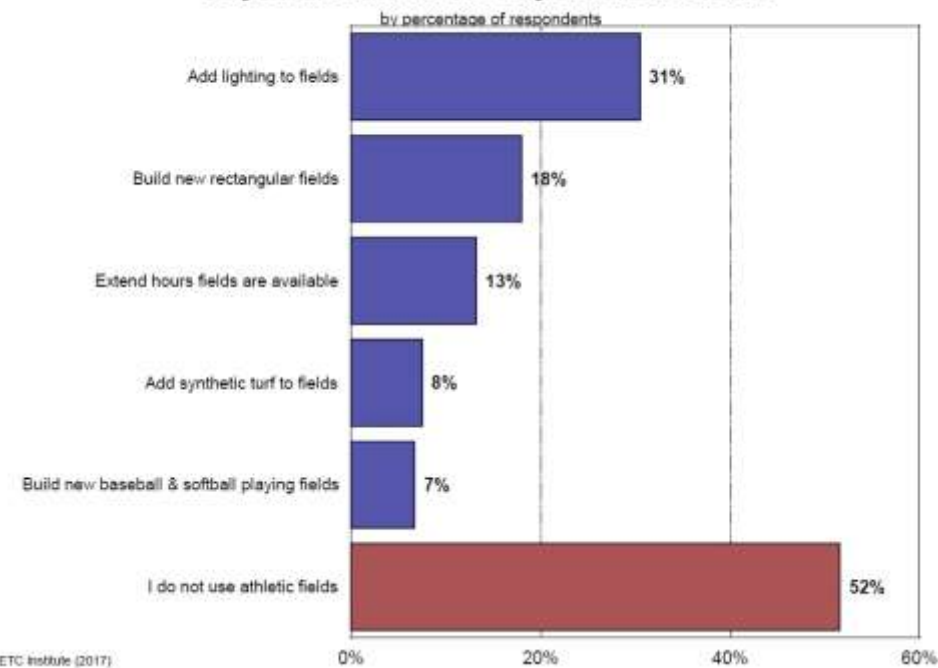


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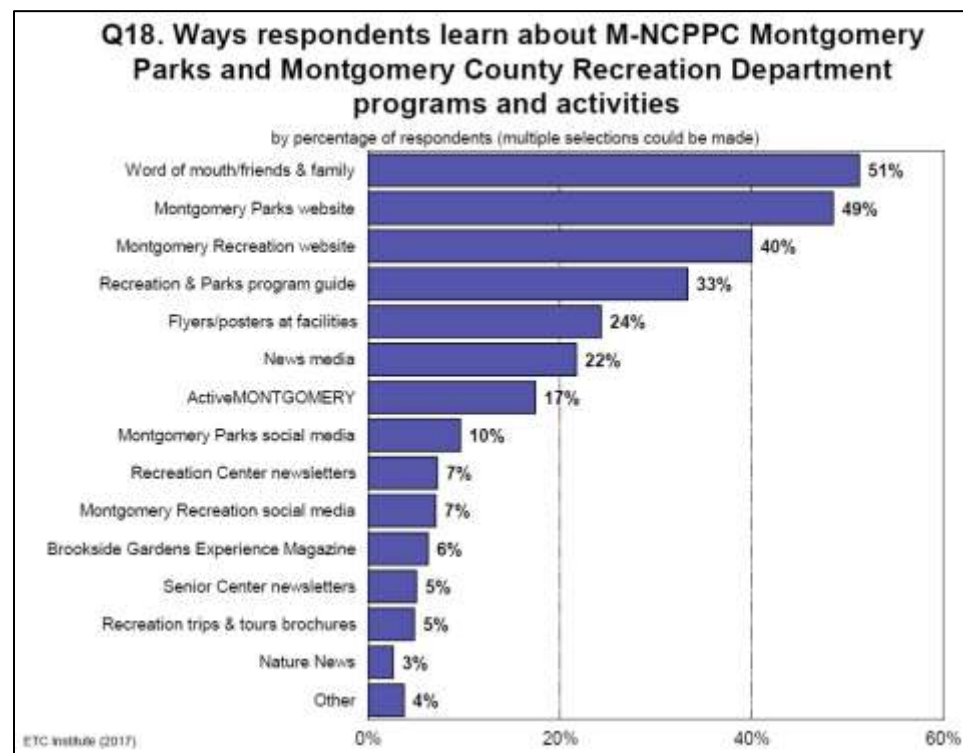
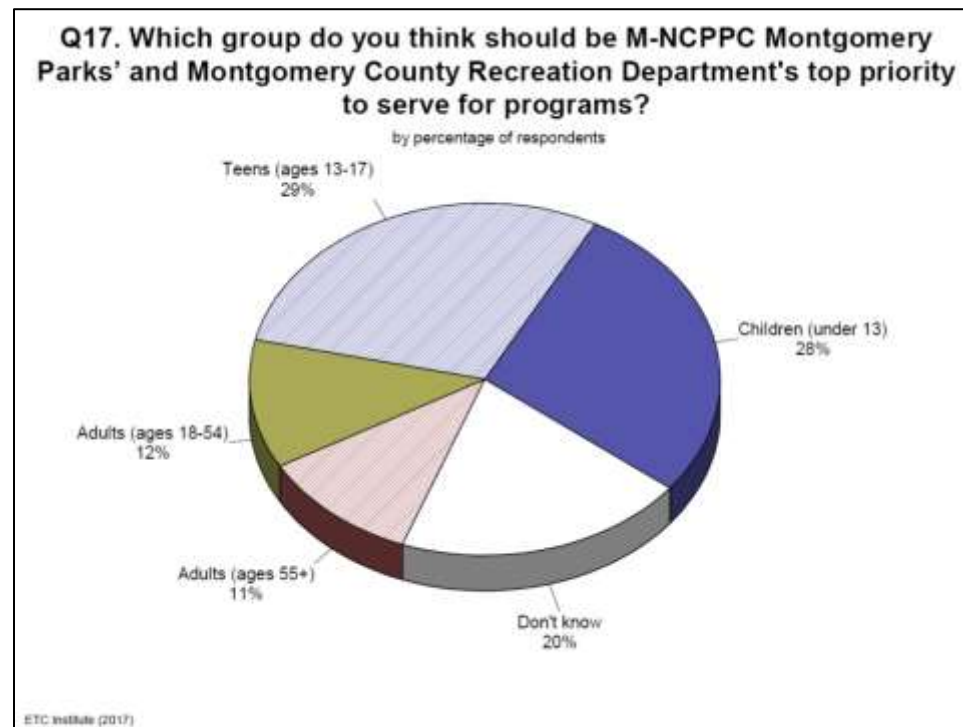
Q14-1. How will the usage of the following types of activities increase or decrease over the next 10 years?

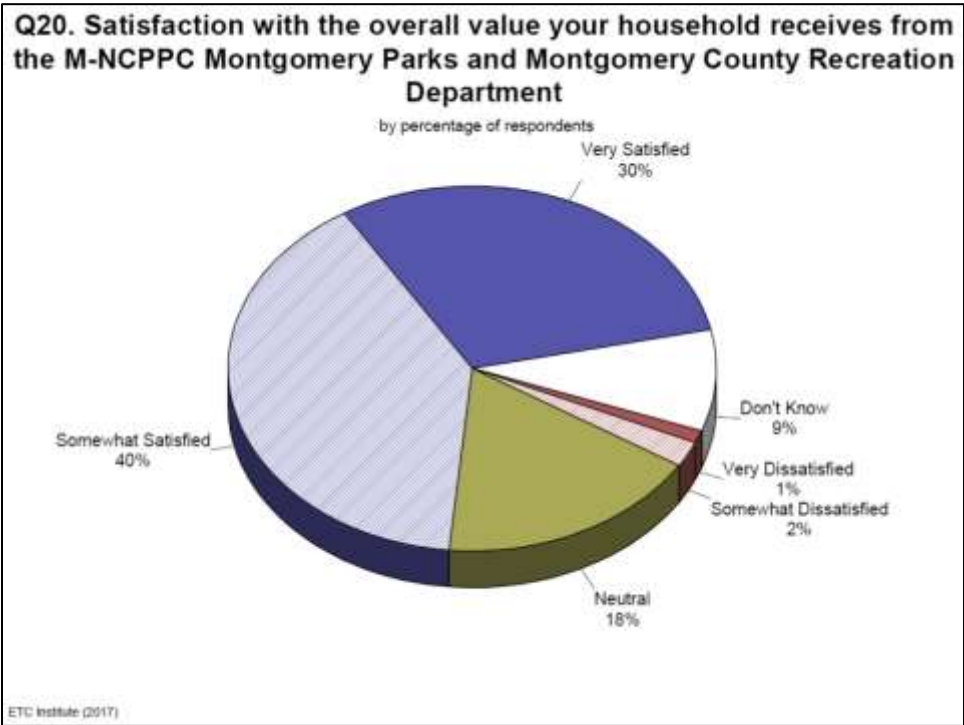
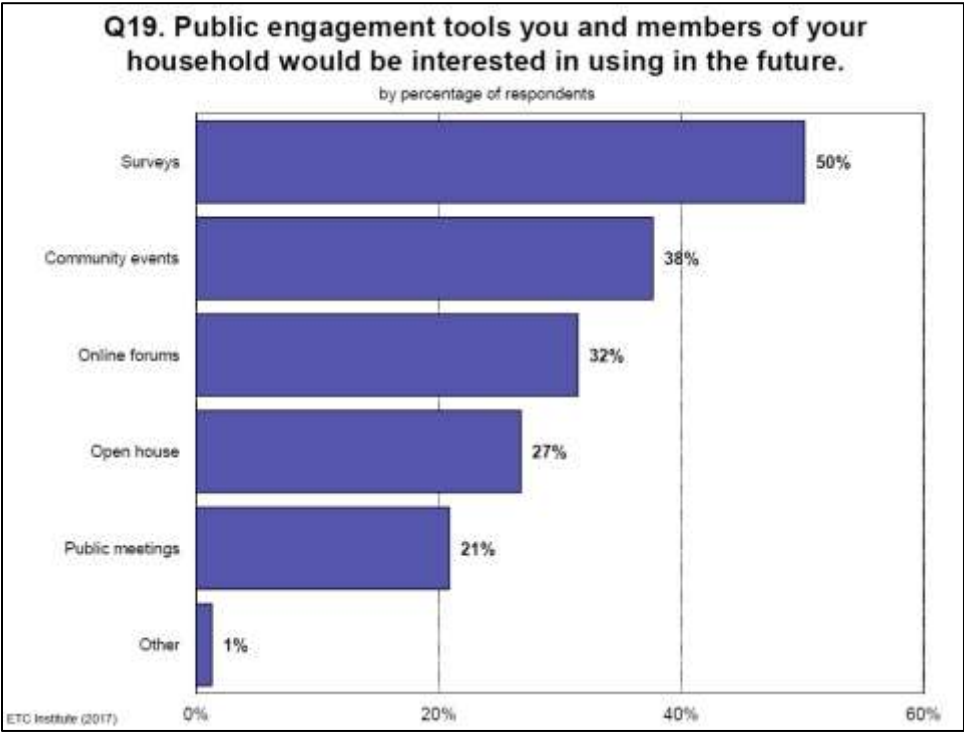


Q16. Which two improvements are most important to you and members of your household?

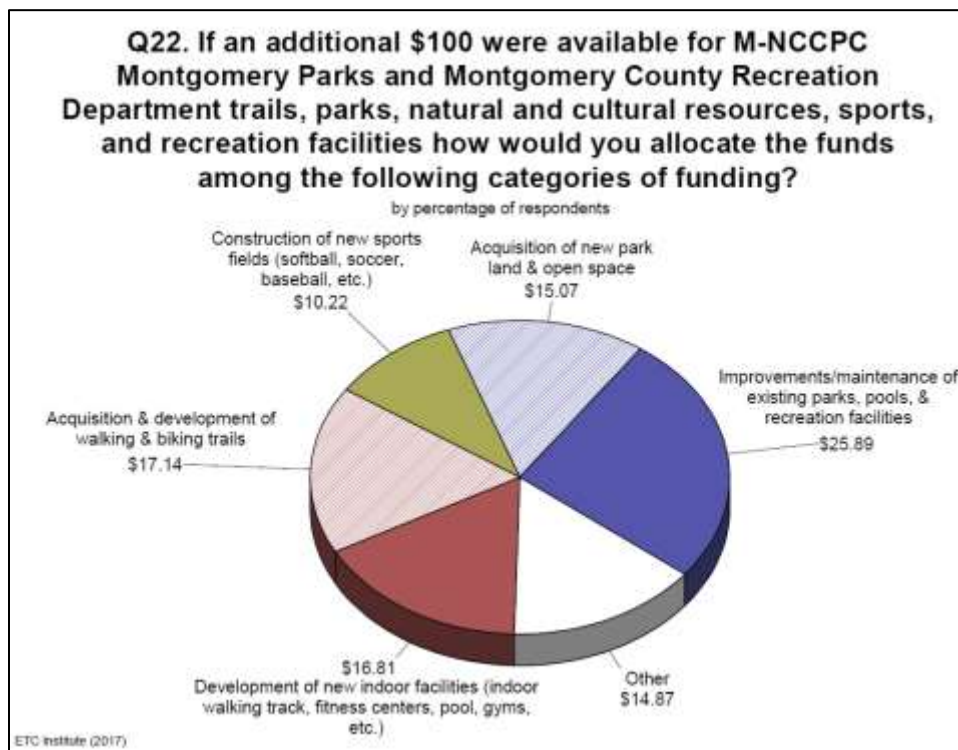
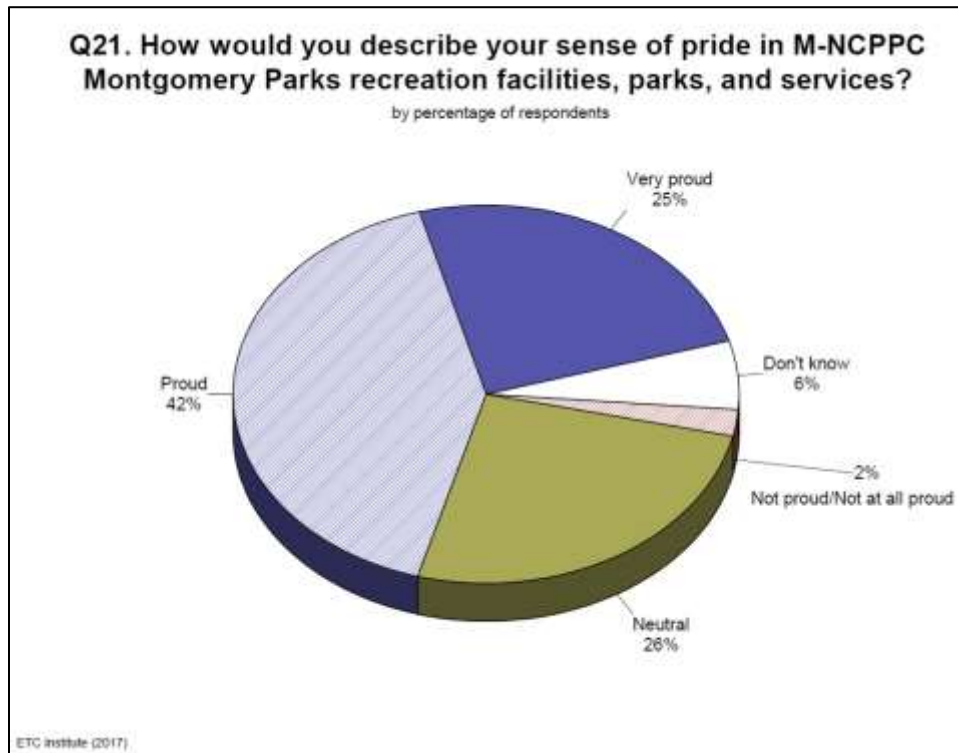


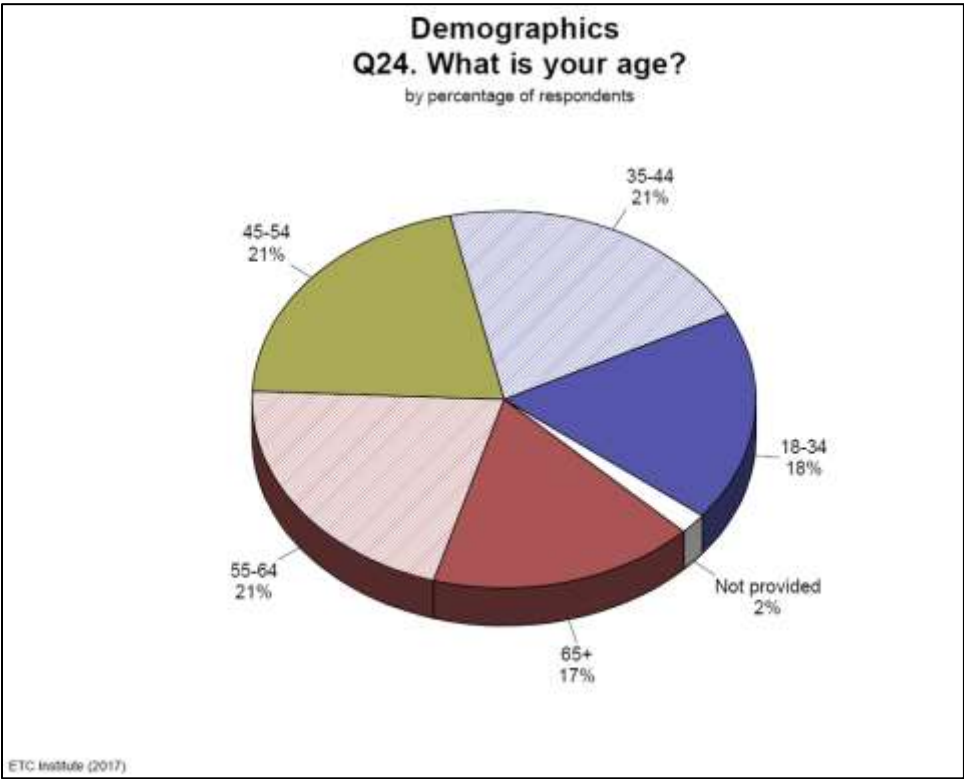
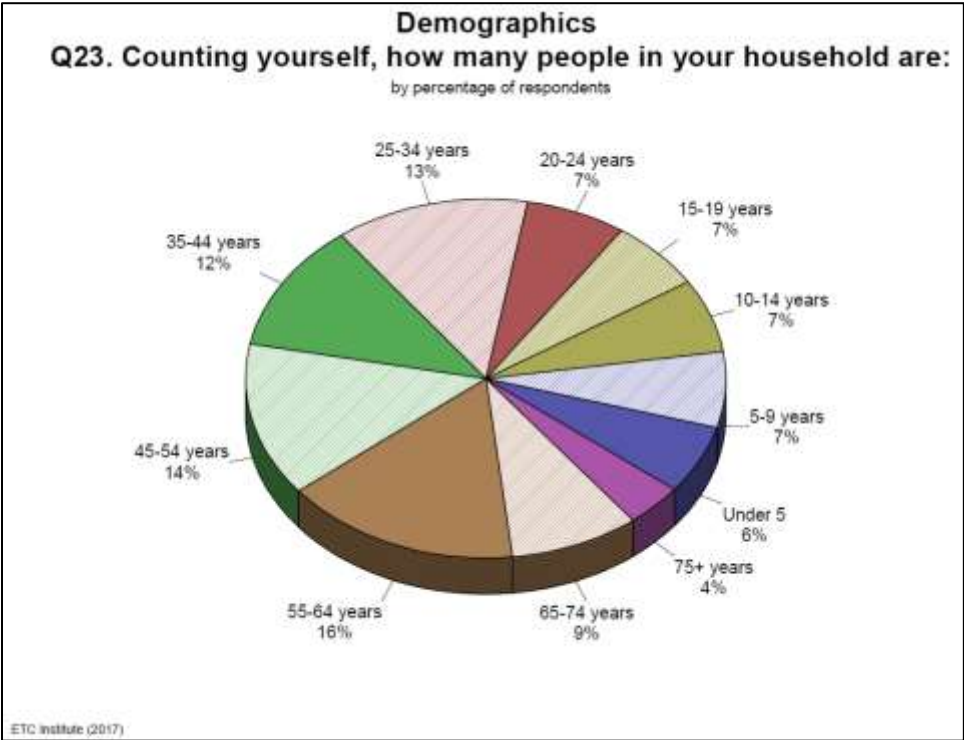
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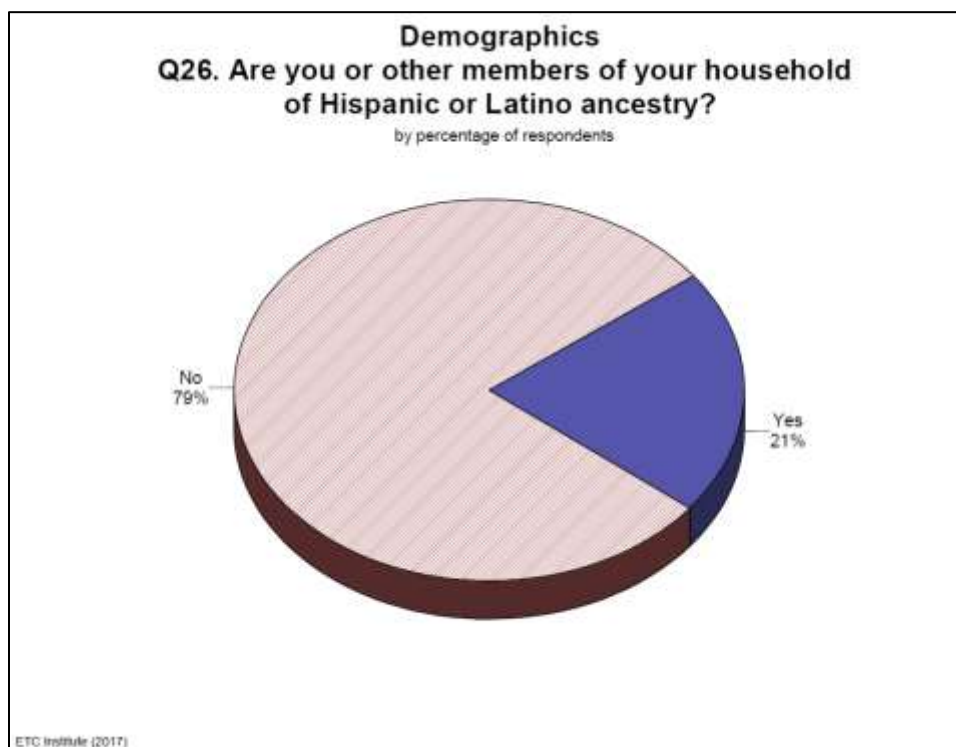
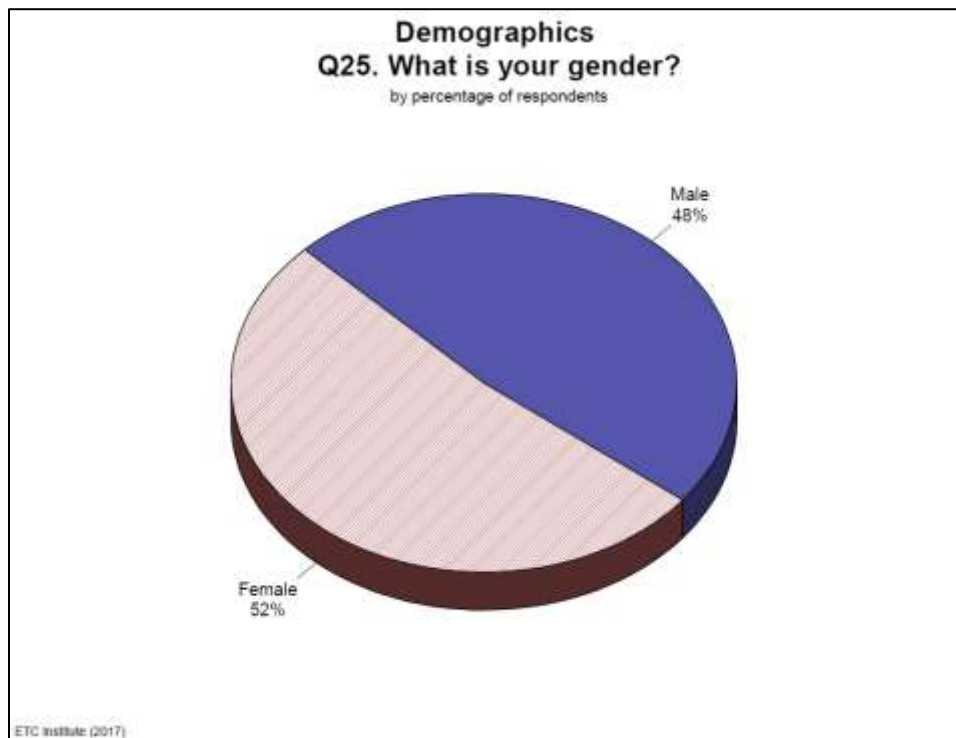


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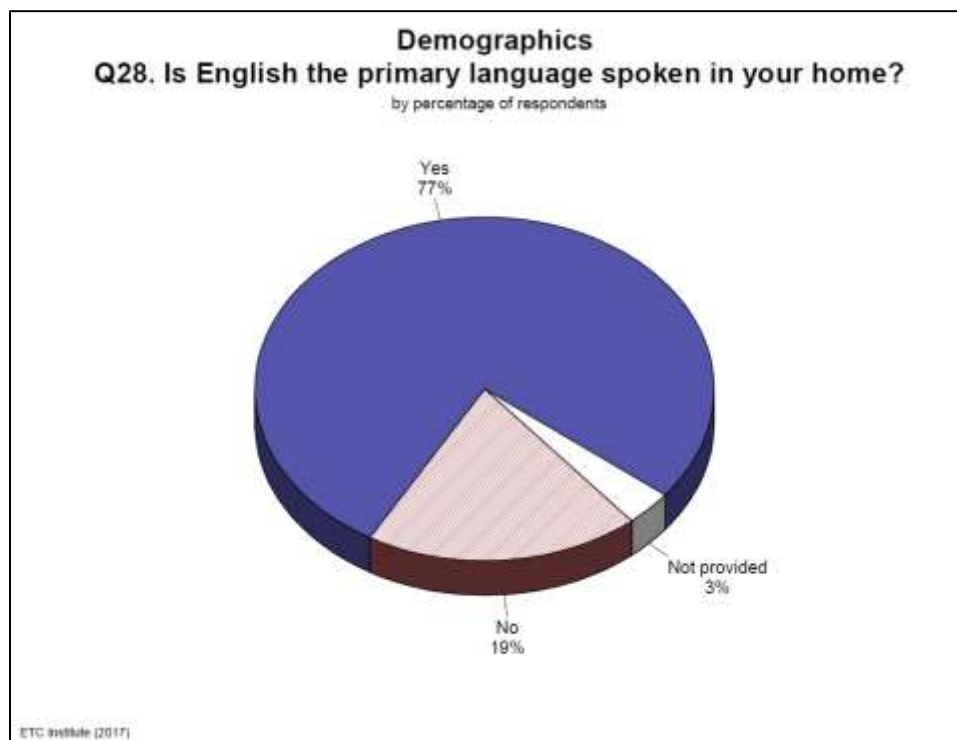
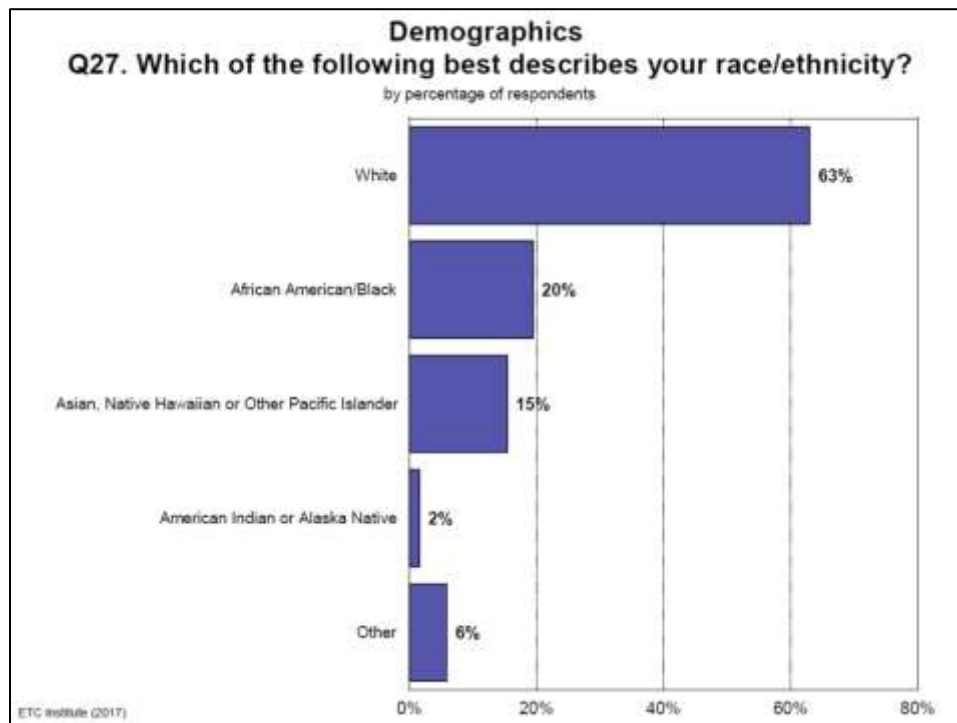


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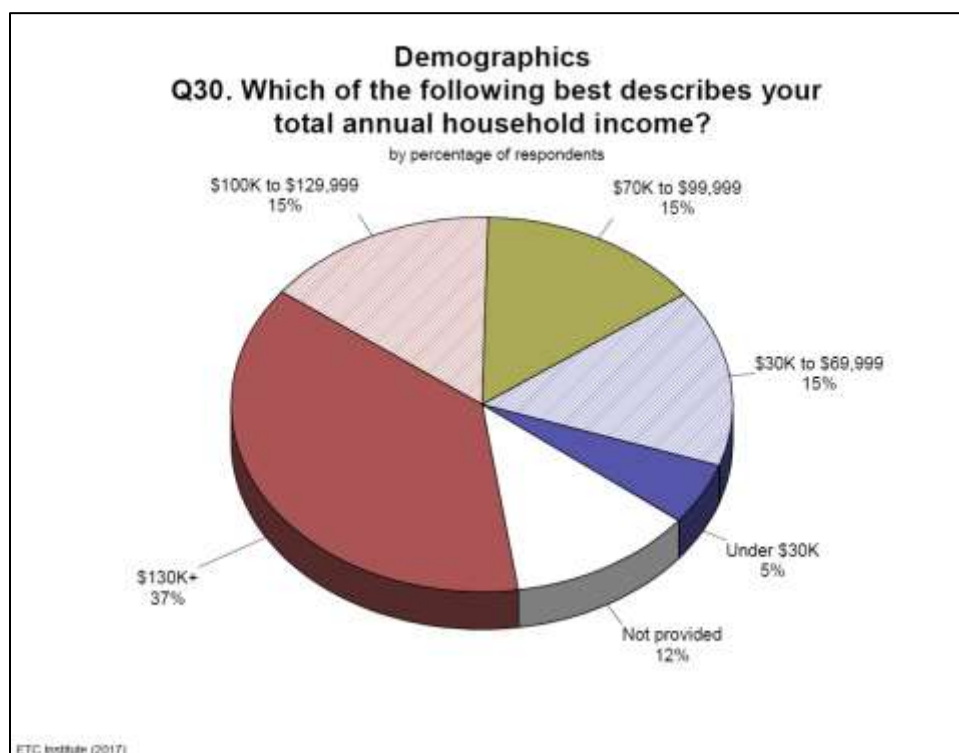
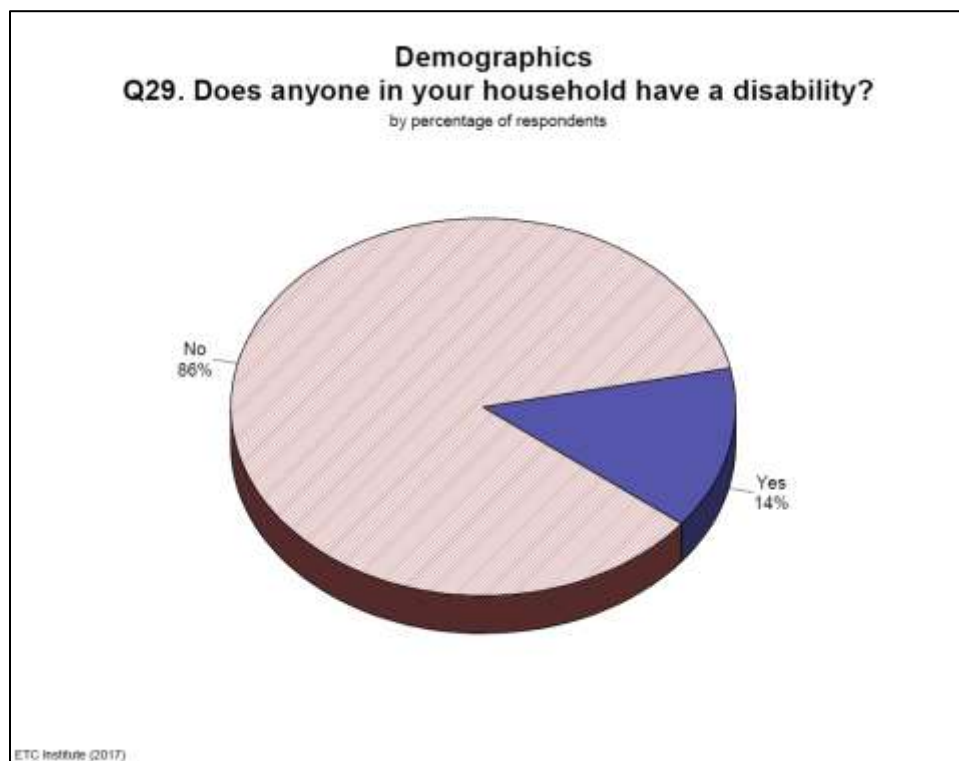




Montgomery Parks

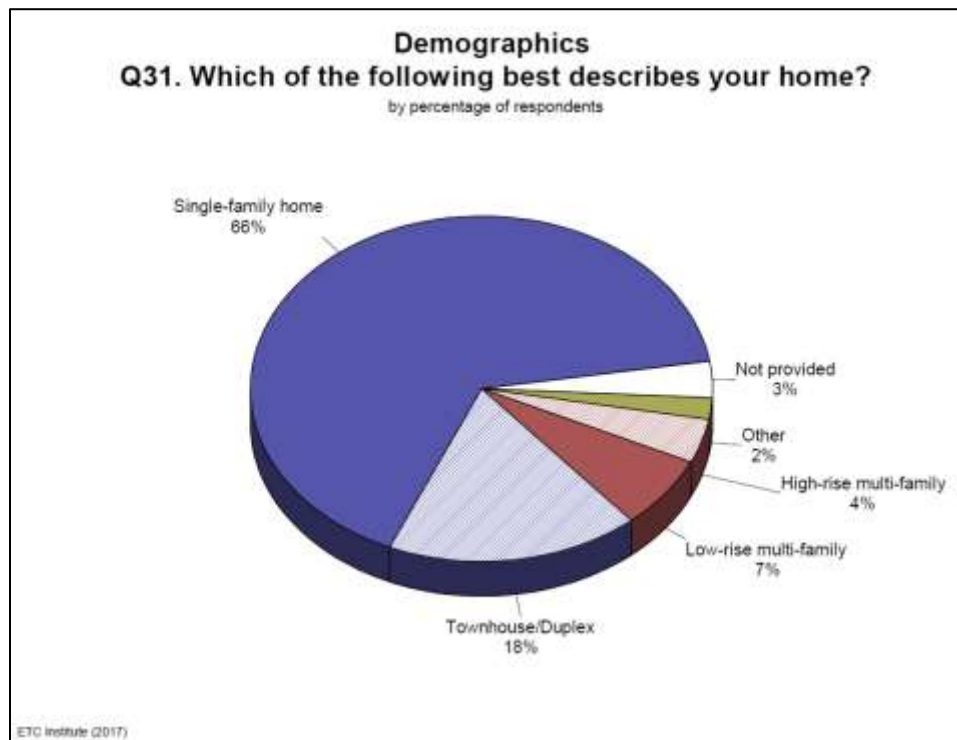


Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Draft Report





Montgomery Parks



10.2 APPENDIX B- FULL COMMUNITIES CONNECT REPORT

MONTGOMERY COUNTY,
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACES
PROS PLAN - FOCUS GROUPS
MINORITIES COMMUNITIES - 2017





INTRODUCTION

Communities Connect Consulting was retained for professional experts services to conduct an extensive public engagement outreach effort, focused on minority communities and to assist in the development of the *2017 Montgomery County Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan Update*. The Department of Parks encouraged the involvement and participation of the minority communities in the planning and review process.

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*. The purpose of the *PROS Plan* is developing strategies to deliver the “right parks in the right places, and to recommend policies and implementation steps for park acquisition, renovation, development and preservation, addressing methods to achieve social equity, health and conservation. The plan will include a policy framework; identify future facility needs and resource conservation priorities.

THE PROCESS

From the beginning of February 2017, the Communities Connect team carefully and diligently orchestrated a diverse public involvement process that incorporated an intense outreach effort in the minority communities organizing six focus groups to hear what the minority communities of Montgomery County had to say, gathering opinions, beliefs and attitudes, encouraging discussion and providing an opportunity to learn more about the parks (the communities findings). A focus group team that was able to deal tactfully with outspoken group members, keep the discussion on track, and made sure every participant was heard. The outreach effort created through this process will be part of the outreach strategy plan, will undergo further public review and is scheduled for adoption in the winter of 2017.

In order to gather input and test ideas with the public, focus groups were held over a period of four weeks. These focus groups were open to individuals who live, in the selected specific minority population areas and were consistently well attended, indicating a strong community interest in the future of the Parks. Throughout the process, all ideas from the public were carefully documented, and used to summarize the development of the outreach plan to the minority communities.

WHY ENGAGE THE MINORITY COMMUNITIES?

The updated plan for the Parks is very timely, with the growing diverse community in the County. Planning for the Parks is important for a variety of reasons:

- Diverse Population Growth throughout the county is generating increased park users and starting to see indications that the system is approaching resources and accommodations saturation.
- Notwithstanding fluctuations in the real estate market, properties in the county will continue to develop, growing a need for parks, recreational, and open space areas.
- The appearance of the Parks do not reflect the diverse community. Parks are aging, are designed primarily to accommodate physically passive individuals, and are unfriendly to the socialization.

The combination of the need to address approach to saturation, the strength of the development potential, and the opportunity to turn the Parks into a signature address for Montgomery County and the region make the 2017 *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Update* a timely and vital undertaking.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Following Communities Connect's introduction presentation, participants were asked to respond to five (5) questions in order to gather verbal feedback. Additionally, respondents were asked to fill out an eight (8) question survey.

Each focus group was recorded and an audiotape of each meeting is provided as part of the Communities Connect report.

Communities Connect engaged in intensive outreach and partnering efforts in order to draw attention to the *PROS Plan Outreach* process and encourage participation at focus groups. These efforts returned very positive results, as participation at each focus group ranged from about 8 to 15 people.

The *Focus Groups with the Minority Communities outreach* process incorporated detailed information the community findings about the parks. This section highlights several of the key findings that arose from the summaries:

FOCUS GROUP 01 - Up-county Area - Targeting the Latino Community

Focus Group One was held in the up-county area. The group in this session generally had two main concerns:

- (1) That there should be greater focus on facilities and amenities for smaller children (between ages 2- 3) and their parents, and;
- (2) That there should be greater efforts on safety, particularly with security and lighting issues being highlighted.

A variety of amenities and facilities related needs were mentioned, including vending areas to buy water, benches, and a place to change the children. Ten years from now, participants would like to see more parks, bigger parks, and parks with more activities for children and sports. The group also expressed that they would like the park to communicate more with them in their language and in ways that is representative of their communities. Additionally, some expressed confusion regarding permit processes.

FOCUS GROUP 02 - Mid-county Area - Targeting the Latino Community

Generally, the group in this session had four recurring concerns:

- (1) Safety and security with a focus on illicit activities and concerns about poor lighting.
- (2) Having more services for children, including programming and spaces where smaller children can play safely.
- (3) Accessibility was a recurring theme, particularly with the perceived danger of crossing Georgia Avenue, the high cost of renting facilities. Additionally, this group discussed the need for more outreach and communication from the parks to the community to facilitate accessibility for community members. It is worth noting that this group also discusses language barriers and wanting more culturally relevant programming as sub-themes of accessibility of the parks.
- (4) Cleanliness of facilities was also an issue for this group. Additionally, though not discussed in depth in the focus group, survey responses showed a desire from participants of this focus group to conduct outreach to better serve the elderly.

FOCUS GROUP 03 - Down-East County area - Targeting the African Community

The answers in this focus group were characterized by settling in Montgomery county very recently compared to other focus groups. All but one respondent indicated they have lived in Montgomery County for less than one year. Some participants in this group had not yet had the opportunity to visit a park but many spoke about what a park is like in their native country and what they would like to see here. Participants were primarily interested in having more varied and targeted sports activities like health and wellness programming for people of all ages. It was also important to this group that the park act as a place of building community through social gatherings so people can meet each other. Cleanliness of the parks, including trails, was an issue that came up as well for this focus group. This group was much less familiar with Montgomery County Parks and how they operate and felt that transportation was a barrier to park access.

FOCUS GROUP 04 - Up - Down East County area - Targeting the Asian Pacific Community

Participants in this focus group highly stressed the importance of various types of programming, including health and fitness programming (such as drop-in yoga outdoor classes), cultural programming, and events. This group talked about parks as meeting points and vehicles for community building and gatherings. In regards to increased accessibility to the parks, this group discussed the need for transportation, proximity, and need of more outreach to diverse communities, youth and seniors. Participants suggested having more outreach by the parks through native language printed media. Two participants discussed the need to have a more updated website in regards to up to date information and a more user-friendly permit application.

FOCUS GROUP 05 - Down - East County area - Targeting the African Community

Participants in this focus group predominantly utilize parks for health, fitness and sports. When discussing improvements, participants stressed the need for more security and regards for safety. Importantly, this group discussed ways that the parks can better engage communities to further their mission, including through partnerships with schools, volunteerism and cultural programming. Regarding how the parks can best reach out to the community participants suggested not focusing only on online outreach but also to conducting outreach through more traditional media such as print (flyers, grocery stores, schedule inserts) and radio. The desire for urban parks was also expressed along with the concern that with increased population in the county, there should be close attention paid to preserving existing green spaces.

FOCUS GROUP 06 - Up - West County area - Targeting the Asian Community

For this focus group, culturally relevant programming and park design came up as prominent themes. Participants expressed that they would like to see parks utilized as centers to promote cultural understanding and learning particularly through more programming and events. Regarding events, some participants felt there could be expanded capacity to accommodate large outdoor events that would need staging and other related equipment like concerts. The majority of participants indicated that they currently utilize the parks for social gatherings with large groups of people like alumni associations or church members. It was suggested to work in partnership with the community, particularly through non-profits to accomplish more cultural programming. Respondents expressed concern with the high cost of Montgomery County Parks as compared to other similar services or adjacent counties.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

❖ **IMPROVE PARK SECURITY AND SAFETY**

Eliminate illicit/illegal activities and make improvements to poor lighting. Decrease the danger of crossing Georgia Avenue by making pedestrian improvements, and provide visible security such as cameras/video recording and security personnel presence within parks and open space facilities.

❖ **CLEANLINESS OF FACILITIES**

Improve the cleanliness of the facilities, including trails, and trash removal.

❖ **PROGRAMING**

Provide more varied and targeted sports activities and health and wellness programming for people of all ages. Target and improve programs for small children ages 2–3. Provide more cultural programming and events.

❖ **PHYSICAL FACILITIES**

Increase facilities and amenities for small children ages 2–3 including spaces where small children can play safely and their parents can engage in meaningful activities. There is a desire for more urbanized parks to preserve existing green spaces in communities, located within walking distance. Expand the park capacity to accommodate large outdoor events that would need staging and other related equipment for venues such as concerts

❖ **ENGAGE COMMUNITIES**

Further the mission of the communities, through partnerships with schools, volunteerism and cultural programs. Many residents currently utilize the parks for social gatherings for large groups of people to hold events for alumni associations, churches, and culturally relevant programs.

Utilize parks as meeting points and vehicles for community building and gatherings. The parks should function as a place for building community through social gatherings so that people can meet each other. Work in partnership with the community, through non-profits to accomplish more cultural programming. Parks should be utilized as centers to promote cultural understanding and learning particularly through more ethnic programming and events.

❖ **ACCESSIBILITY**

Eliminate language barriers in staffing and signage. Conduct outreach to better serve the elderly and families. Eliminate the high cost of utilizing Montgomery County Parks as compared to other similar services or those in adjacent counties.

Provide outreach through more traditional media such as print (flyers, grocery stores, schedule inserts) and radio. Regular communication is needed from the parks to the community to facilitate accessibility for community members. The high cost of renting facilities is prohibitive. Transportation cost is a barrier to park access for many participants.



PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Communities Connect Leadership provided overall strategic direction and continuing participation in the *Montgomery County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Focus Groups with the Minority Communities*. The Leadership carefully deliberated on ideas and issues that surfaced throughout the focus groups. The support of these individuals enhanced and encouraged the development of this process. The Communities Connect, which designed and guided the process. Their guidance ensured that every detail of the process was addressed. Communities Connect is most appreciative of their efforts on our behalf.

PARTICIPANTS

The foundation of *Montgomery County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Focus Groups with Minority Communities* is made up of the ideas generated at the focus groups and written comments. The community comments received during the process will be very important in shaping the plan principles. These individuals fulfilled their roles as citizens in a clear and concrete fashion by investing their time and energy into this project. Their work constructed part of the basic content of the vision that will become the Montgomery parks future. In addition to the government agencies, other public and private entities provided essential contributions for which we are grateful.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

The project manager team managed and implemented the process, including working in partnership with the prime consultant team PROS Inc. Project team members carefully deliberated on ideas and issues that surfaced through the community process in organizing the focus groups, and brought their own technical expertise. This team has been working diligently since beginning of 2017. We are grateful to make possible the extraordinary level of public participation in the *Montgomery County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Focus Groups with Minority Communities*.

MAYRA BAYONET - COMMUNITIES CONNECT PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Bayonet is a community development relationship manager that holds a degree in architecture/urban planning. Her career spans 34 years of experience in community planning, customer relations, community development, and community outreach. She also has over 15 years of public service experience at the city and county level, and has worked primarily in diverse, multi-cultural and often times disadvantaged environments. She has a deep knowledge of government processes with an exemplary record of strengthening communication between communities and organizations. Ms. Bayonet is a recognized force in the community who is present at many community outreach and advocacy events. She is constantly creating connections between community groups and in turn gets things done.

RAUL MEDRANO - ENTREPRENEUR | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL | EDUCATOR

Raul was born in Washington, DC, his parents are from Honduras-Central America. He currently resides near downtown Silver Spring, Maryland with his wife and family, as well as lived in Montgomery County for over 20 years. Graduated from Johns Hopkins University-Carey Business School with an MBA and concentration in Organizational and Leadership Development. Also, he is a graduate of the University of Maryland-College Park Campus, having earned a B.S. Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. Medrano, has an extensive background in economic development, having worked for the Montgomery County Economic Development Department from 2006-2011 and under two County Executive administrations. Formed part of the Germantown Sector Plan update from 2006-2010, as well as the Germantown Task Force which was an alliance of community stakeholders and business leaders during the Germantown Sector Plan Study period. Manager and Instructor, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Program, Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School for Adults in NW, Washington, DC. Campus Director, Ana G. Mendez University System, Capital Area Campus, Wheaton, MD. Business Development Specialist, Montgomery County Department of Economic Development.

MARIA P. RODRIGUEZ - INTERPRETER | ADMINISTRATIVE | PARALEGAL

President/Owner of MPR Translations, LLC, recognized by the Daily Record of Baltimore as Maryland's Top 100 Women for 2012. A graduate of John Jay College, BS in Criminal Justice, Paralegal and Spanish Interpreter-Translator. A devoted community member at the local, county and states levels. Involved with private organizations to advance opportunities for women in business, the Hispanic community and charitable organizations, notably MD Hispanic Business Conference, The Featherstone Foundation, The Susana De Moya Foundation, CODR, Alzheimer's Association and the Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

DESIREE BAYONET - AUDIO TECHNICIAN

Désirée is a multimedia producer with experience in video, audio, and graphic design. She holds a B.A. in Electronic Media from George Washington University and a M.A. in Educational Communication and Technology from New York University. Désirée is particularly interested in the intersection of technology, education, and storytelling. Désirée co-founded audio storytelling collective, From Block2Block, which engages community members in telling stories from their own community. She is currently the Program Director for WOWD-LP, a community radio station just outside of Washington, D.C.

ANA REYES - RESEARCH ANALYST

Ana holds an M.A. in Latin American and Latino Studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago where she was an Abraham Lincoln Fellow. She also holds a B.A. in Anthropology and Spanish Language and Cultures from the University of Maryland, College Park. She has formal training in quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and has extensive experience in methodologies of social science research, including oral histories, focus group facilitation, and surveying. Her past roles have allowed her to combine this social science research background with administrative experience, including strategic planning and project management for nonprofit organizations. For over ten years, she has worked to increase opportunities for diverse communities of the DC-Metro Area through direct service, research, advocacy and policy work.



10.3 APPENDIX C- INTERCEPT SURVEY #1

COPY OF INTERCEPT SURVEY #1 (ENGLISH & SPANISH VERSIONS)



Montgomery County, MD

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

1. Do you use or visit Montgomery County Parks or Facilities? (If yes, go to 1a else go to 1b)
1a. If yes, what parks do you like to visit most?

1b. If not, what are the reasons you don't use Montgomery County Parks or Facilities?

2. Are there any park amenities or recreation programs missing in the parks that you visit that you would like to see added or changed to make your experience better?

3. How would you want us to communicate with you about future offerings and updates?

Other Comments, if any:

English



Montgomery County, MD

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

1. ¿Usted visita los parques o usa las instalaciones del Condado de Montgomery?
(Si su respuesta es "sí" pase a pregunta 1a. Si su respuesta es "no" pasa a 1b)
1a. ¿Cuáles parques le gusta visitar más?

1b. ¿Cuáles son las razones por cual no utiliza los parques o instalaciones del Condado de Montgomery?

2. ¿Hay comodidades del parque o programas de recreación que no existen en los parques que visita que gustaría ver añadido o modificado para mejorar su experiencia?

3. ¿Cómo desea que nos comuniquemos con usted acerca de información de última hora o programación?

Otros comentarios, si los hay:

Spanish

INTERCEPT SURVEY #1: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY QUESTION

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| A | 1 | Keep parks natural, don't let in commercial shops, advertisements, etc. |
| | 2 | The city is doing a good job of keeping kids safe at the playgrounds |
| | 3 | City's current management of the parks is good |
| | 4 | Plants and flowers need to be kept well-maintained |
| | 5 | Need more access to public restrooms |
| B | 6 | Staff is great, especially with kids |
| | 7 | Dissatisfied in the limited summer camp offerings |
| | 8 | People with pets don't have any space for leisure activity |
| D | 9 | Water fountains sometimes don't work in the parks |
| | 10 | Whetstone Park's fences need to be fixed |
| | 11 | Need to ensure parks are clean and safe |
| | 12 | Hours for boating need to be extended |
| | 13 | More pavilions are needed |
| | 14 | We really enjoy the ferris wheel at Watkins Park |
| | 15 | Better signage is needed for restrooms |
| | 16 | Better signage is needed for fields (Fredrick) |
| | 17 | Website needs to be kept updated with most important information |
| | 18 | Restrooms are currently self-maintained |



INTERCEPT SURVEY #1: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, BY LOCATION

| | |
|---|--|
| Plum Gar Neighborhood Recreation Center | <p>Can we open earlier. Other facilities open at 9am but Plum Gar doesn't open until 10am. Also,</p> <p>1 it needs to be open longer on Sundays.</p> <p>2 So far things are great.</p> <p>3 Need to listen more to the Chinese community in this area (Plum Gar)</p> <p>4 Need to sound proof game room, its too noisy</p> <p>5 Opened limited hours to the public</p> <p>6 Limited summer hours and limited hours for seniors regularly</p> <p>7 Limited time for playing ping pong (only available for 2-hours on Fridays)</p> |
| Germantown Community Recreation Center | <p>8 Better communication through the schools, outreach</p> <p>9 Extended operating hours</p> <p>10 Market in local newspaper about community center events</p> <p>11 Need beeter landscaping (more flowers)</p> <p>12 Enjoy talking to the Chinese staff members at the community center</p> <p>13 Ping pong tables are great</p> <p>14 Staff members are nice</p> <p>15 Facility lacking hot water</p> |
| Upper County Community Recreation Center | <p>16 I have a lot of fun at the park</p> <p>17 Love being at the community center and at the parks</p> |
| Gwendolyn E. Coffield Community Recreation Center | <p>18 It is always clean in here and I like that they offer classes for people with disabilities</p> <p>19 I'm glad that the trash cans went back in the parks</p> <p>20 I think the parks are great; Montgomery County gives great value for our taxes</p> <p>21 Soccer fields need irrigation</p> <p>22 There is some erosion down by the playground</p> <p>23 Thank you for blowing the leaves instead of just mowing over them like in previous years</p> <p>24 I think MNCPPC does a great job</p> <p>25 Please keeo the paved paths in prime condition</p> <p>26 Keep creeks free of "strainers" so canoes and kayaks can float safely</p> <p>27 The bathrooms always stink</p> <p>28 Recreation centers need to offer affordable rental space for small vendors</p> |
| Long Branch Community Recreation Center | <p>29 I like the Tai Chi and Zumba classes that are offered</p> <p>30 More security is needed in the parks; especially when kids are playing</p> <p>31 Last year there was a secuirty problem at Long Branch, would like to see the security increased</p> <p>32 There are major accessibility issues getting into the park ADA</p> <p>33 It would be nice to have waste bags</p> <p>34 More park land needs to be purchased in this area, especially around Silver Springs Library</p> |
| White Oak Community Recreation Center | <p>35 Mid County gym is to small</p> <p>36 Long Branch needs to fix their steps and have more stairs</p> <p>37 Long Branch needs to have more parking spaces for the disabled</p> <p>38 I wish White Oak was open throughout the holidays</p> <p>39 Long Branch needs enhanced since gas line explosion</p> <p>40 Long Branch is a dead zone for phones</p> <p>41 System is doing a great job</p> <p>42 Schweinhaut Senior Center needs to be renovated</p> |

10.4 APPENDIX D- INTERCEPT SURVEY #2

COPY OF INTERCEPT SURVEY #2

Please rank your top 3 favorite things to do in parks • Por favor clasifique sus 3 cosas favoritas para hacer en los parques

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| # | sports • deportes |         |
| # | trails • caminos |         |
| # | nature & camping • naturaleza & campamentos |         |
| # | history & education • historia & educación |         |
| # | events & festivals • eventos y festivales |         |
| # | special places • lugares especiales |         |
| # | gathering places • lugares para reuniones |         |

What would make our parks better? • ¿Cómo mejoraríamos los parques?

zip code • código postal:

email:

Please rank your top 3 favorite things to do in parks • Por favor clasifique sus 3 cosas favoritas para hacer en los parques

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| # | sports • deportes |         |
| # | trails • caminos |         |
| # | nature & camping • naturaleza & campamentos |         |
| # | history & education • historia & educación |         |
| # | events & festivals • eventos y festivales |         |
| # | special places • lugares especiales |         |
| # | gathering places • lugares para reuniones |         |

What would make our parks better? • ¿Cómo mejoraríamos los parques?

zip code • código postal:

email:



INTERCEPT SURVEY #2: FULL RESULTS

Ranking of the top 3 most important facilities/services provided by Montgomery County Parks.

WORLD OF MONTGOMERY FESTIVAL - ROCKVILLE, MD, OCTOBER 16, 2016

| Choice | SPORTS | TRAILS | NATURE | HISTORY | EVENTS | SPECIAL PLACES | GATHERING PLACES |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|------------------|
| 1st | 47 | 61 | 28 | 19 | 44 | 12 | 13 |
| 2nd | 29 | 46 | 43 | 16 | 41 | 19 | 11 |
| 3rd | 25 | 24 | 31 | 21 | 40 | 34 | 31 |

SILVER SPRING TREE LIGHTING - SILVER SPRING, MD, NOVEMBER 12, 2016

| Choice | SPORTS | TRAILS | NATURE | HISTORY | EVENTS | SPECIAL PLACES | GATHERING PLACES |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|------------------|
| 1st | 74 | 78 | 33 | 24 | 49 | 12 | 12 |
| 2nd | 24 | 52 | 58 | 34 | 53 | 13 | 15 |
| 3rd | 30 | 27 | 36 | 25 | 43 | 35 | 28 |

INTERCEPT SURVEY #2: WHAT WOULD MAKE OUR PARKS BETTER?

Number Responses

| | |
|----|---|
| 1 | More isolated, natural places. |
| 2 | More nature centers and events. |
| 3 | Adventure. |
| 4 | Lots of activities and parks. |
| 5 | If we could also go on stage. |
| 6 | I wish there were more fields and trees. |
| 7 | gardens |
| 8 | more events. |
| 9 | involve community more, disseminate event information. |
| 10 | easy access for all family to enjoy. |
| 11 | more of them. |
| 12 | nature trails, love how montgomery county has already kept play grounds and updated and clean |
| 13 | about outdoor fitness stations, more dog parks. |
| 14 | more kids facilities. |
| 15 | more trash cans. |

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Draft Report

| Number | Responses |
|--------|---|
| 16 | renovate maydale - return the programs. |
| 17 | Prizes |
| 18 | bathrooms. |
| 19 | keep them cleaner. |
| 20 | with more park policies. |
| 21 | no smoking |
| 22 | making dog registration information more available (dog parks) |
| 23 | more activities. |
| 24 | creating more activities for students and young people. |
| 25 | more accessibility and information known. |
| 26 | better trash receptacles. |
| 27 | ride bikes. |
| 28 | don't waste. |
| 29 | make them cleaner and set up more trash cleaning events. |
| 30 | large space for more people. |
| 31 | more parks. |
| 32 | more community awareness. |
| 33 | keep it clean. |
| 34 | keep clean. |
| 35 | a water museum would be great. |
| 36 | more recycling bins by every trash can. |
| 37 | safety. |
| 38 | diversity culturally. |
| 39 | make more. |
| 40 | Fenced area for toddlers and special needs. Shaded play parks, sensory gardens. |
| 41 | Restrooms. |
| 42 | Easy public transit and bike lanes to the parks. |
| 43 | Easier methods to learn about events like a weekly or monthly digest. |
| 44 | More bike trails, easy public transportation. |
| 45 | Swings. |
| 46 | recycling bins, swings, carousel. |
| 47 | More kids activities. |
| 48 | with animals. |
| 49 | organized and clean |



Montgomery Parks

| Number | Responses |
|--------|--|
| 50 | more parks for children. |
| 51 | ensure accessibility for all. |
| 52 | better signage (wheaton regional) |
| 53 | playgrounds. |
| 54 | neighborhood activities for us to meet each other. |
| 55 | dog bag stations. |
| 56 | plaques saying to clean up and not litter. |
| 57 | park with water recreations and activities. |
| 58 | swimming pool. |
| 59 | water fountains. |
| 60 | keep it up. These are natural treasure. |
| 61 | electric outlets at pavilions. |
| 62 | parking. |
| 63 | clean all the time. |
| 64 | less taxes. |
| 65 | Clean quiet spaces. |
| 66 | Prevent littering. More picnic areas and bathrooms. |
| 67 | If they could have a kids nature park. |
| 68 | 8ft Basketball hoops. |
| 69 | Some of them need more clean up. |
| 70 | More trash cans. |
| 71 | More Sanitary. |
| 72 | Trails stay safe and clean. |
| 73 | Recreation Centers in Jessup Blair Park. |
| 74 | Clean facilities. |
| 75 | Fun structures. |
| 76 | Separate area to promote animal habitat. More trees and shade near playground areas. |
| 77 | More water fountains. |
| 78 | Make more accessible to shelters. |
| 79 | More picnic areas. |
| 80 | More pools. |
| 81 | More fun biking trails. |
| 82 | More activities for children such as train. |
| 83 | Rachel Carson - allow bikes. |

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Draft Report

| Number | Responses |
|--------|---|
| 84 | More tot and playgrounds for older kids. |
| 85 | More lights in the evening by kurliy. |
| 86 | More trash cans on nature trails. |
| 87 | Benches, shaded places. Water fountains. |
| 88 | Better landscapes with colorful flowers. |
| 89 | Nature. |
| 90 | Sports. |
| 91 | Animal Zoo and more swings. |
| 92 | Keep them clean. |
| 93 | Ziplines. |
| 94 | Playgrounds. |
| 95 | More programs. |
| 96 | Dirty. |
| 97 | More greenery. |
| 98 | To make sure it's geared for all ages. |
| 99 | Better access to parks by bike and safe roads. |
| 100 | More water fountains and playgrounds. |
| 101 | Facilities maintainance in small park areas. |
| 102 | Our Parks are the best. |
| 103 | Cleaning. |
| 104 | I think the parks are so pretty. |
| 105 | More options of play areas for kids. |
| 106 | More ramping sites, and events. |
| 107 | You do good things. Just keep protecting the parks. |
| 108 | The parks are great normally. Keep it up. |
| 109 | More exposure about various events. |
| 110 | By putting candy at the end of the trail. |
| 111 | Parks are great. |
| 112 | We need more parks. |
| 113 | More water parks. |
| 114 | More events. |
| 115 | Better Playgrounds. |
| 116 | Park near my appartment. |
| 117 | Everything is perfect. |



Montgomery Parks

| Number | Responses |
|--------|--|
| 118 | Swings. |
| 119 | Playgrounds. |
| 120 | Toddler friendly swing sets. |
| 121 | More playgrounds. |
| 122 | More festival events. |
| 123 | More hockey classes, not just ice hockey. |
| 124 | Better managed soccer fields. |
| 125 | More bathrooms. |
| 126 | Better trails for running with guides. More bathrooms. |
| 127 | Making it more family friendly, such as installing more benches, barbeque places, etc. |
| 128 | Cookouts much fun. |
| 129 | Adult/senior sports/fitness activities in evenings and weekends. |
| 130 | More swings. |
| 131 | Better maintenance of buildings. |
| 132 | More playgrounds! But they're great how they are. |
| 133 | Special musical events. |
| 134 | A skate park. |
| 135 | Add resources for kids. |
| 136 | Petting zoo. |
| 137 | Printed trail maps. |
| 138 | Modern playgrounds. |
| 139 | More events for older people. |
| 140 | More sports. |
| 141 | More open to dogs. |
| 142 | I would like more playgrounds and park in New Hampshire Estates. |
| 143 | Trash collection. |
| 144 | More activity and trails. |
| 145 | Happy with them. |
| 146 | See more animals, concert in Parks. |
| 147 | More activities and fun for children. |
| 148 | Bathroom facilities in all. |
| 149 | Benches. |
| 150 | Benches, Water fountains. |
| 151 | A heated or coll building. |

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Draft Report

| Number | Responses |
|--------|---|
| 152 | Extended time please. |
| 153 | More kid friendly activities at the play grounds. |
| 154 | I love the parks, I just wish people would stop littering. |
| 155 | More lighting for evening events. |
| 156 | Filtered water fountains. |
| 157 | Swimming pools, fitness centers. |
| 158 | Working swings, cleane jungle gym. |
| 159 | Clean restrooms. |
| 160 | I really enjoy all the programs that you provide. Thank you. |
| 161 | Swimming pools. |
| 162 | They are geat as is. |
| 163 | More lights for the night. |
| 164 | Event days, flower watching |
| 165 | Attention to older parks, down county that have proper drainage, weeding needed, etc to make them usable, safe and beautiful. |
| 166 | More slides. |
| 167 | More history. |
| 168 | More seesaws. |
| 169 | Tennis courts, dog parks. |
| 170 | We need more park space in silver spring downtown. |
| 171 | More parks. |
| 172 | Wheelchair accessible. |
| 173 | Fix active montgomery/not user friendly. |
| 174 | Recycling Containers. |
| 175 | Access to public transportation. |
| 176 | Events that engage and educate the community. Although I know this is already done. |
| 177 | More animals and animal centers. |
| 178 | More places outdoors, more trees in cities. |
| 179 | More lights, better crossing, more, safety crossings. |
| 180 | Make trails smoother. |
| 181 | Not much, maybe just more frequent maintainance of the playgrounds, some of the stations are broken or I need of a paint job. |
| 182 | All dog accessible. |
| 183 | More open space. |
| 184 | Pet friendly. |



Montgomery Parks

Number Responses

| | |
|-----|---|
| 185 | Playgrounds, well marked hiking trails. |
| 186 | More woods; communal farming areas. |
| 187 | OK. |
| 188 | All together. |
| 189 | Updated play sets (Becca Lilly Park) |
| 190 | Post events on social media. |
| 191 | Good lighting. |
| 192 | Horse back riding. |
| 193 | More bathrooms. They're pretty great already. |
| 194 | Jungle gyms for kids. |
| 195 | Lot more play stuff for kids. |

INTERCEPT SURVEY #2: WHAT ELSE?

| Number | Response Text |
|--------|--|
| 1 | Everything is perfect, more information. |
| 2 | More events and ways to know them. |
| 3 | Parks are great. |
| 4 | Water |
| 5 | Swimming |
| 6 | You are doing good. |
| 7 | unprogrammed open spaces, trees, flowers. |
| 8 | bicycles |
| 9 | more events. |
| 10 | camoes/kayaks (but rentals cost too much) |
| 11 | dog parks |
| 12 | more adventures. |
| 13 | more activities. |
| 14 | playgrounds |
| 15 | play areas. |
| 16 | trash collection |
| 17 | It's more a matter of how do I find out all that is going on. I feel I miss a lot. I don't know what is available. Is there a map of MC or symbols. What is available? |
| 18 | clean up for SSL Hours. |
| 19 | water sports. |

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Draft Report

| | |
|----|---|
| 20 | bikes and boats. |
| 21 | public activities. |
| 22 | more organized events. |
| 23 | rides and activities. |
| 24 | more camp grounds locally. |
| 25 | food. |
| 26 | lots of area to have fun in. |
| 27 | dog parks. |
| 28 | places for picnics. |
| 29 | a water fountain. |
| 30 | bathrooms. |
| 31 | more water fountains for people. |
| 32 | free coffee libraries and chess games. |
| 33 | More preschool nature programs on different days. Clarksburg only on Mondays, wanted something closer to Boyds on Tuesdays and Thursdays. |
| 34 | fun rides, train rides. |
| 35 | The slide. |
| 36 | Feeling of Safety. |
| 37 | Maybe public movie nights. |
| 38 | North Potomac needs an indoor swimming pool. |
| 39 | wheelchair accessible trails, BBQ pits |
| 40 | floral gardens. |
| 41 | ponds with lily pads. |
| 42 | playgrounds for kids. |
| 43 | some security. |
| 44 | tennis facilities for solo tennis. |
| 45 | video games. |
| 46 | playgrounds. |
| 47 | If there were trampolines. |
| 48 | More info to know what's happeninig. |
| 49 | Summer camp programs, love the nature camps. They were great. |
| 50 | Roller skating rink in the park. Community sign-up for family camping trips in parks |
| 51 | Basketball and art. |
| 52 | Tall rock climbing walls. |
| 53 | Dog Parks. |
| 54 | I like to walk with my dogs. |



Montgomery Parks

| | |
|----|--|
| 55 | I love group biking and hiking. |
| 56 | More gardens, like brookside gardens. |
| 57 | Recreation Centers. |
| 58 | Playgrounds. |
| 59 | Bike Paths. |
| 60 | Slides. |
| 61 | Geocaching. |
| 62 | Playgrounds. |
| 63 | More places for shade, especially the fields. |
| 64 | Running Trails and water. |
| 65 | Maybe some more zen places like squares with fountains or rides. |
| 66 | Holiday Festivals and Events. |
| 67 | Summer Camps. |
| 68 | Basketball Courts. |
| 69 | Play area for kids. |
| 70 | Maintainence and trails free of weeds. |
| 71 | More trash cans. |
| 72 | Playgrounds. |
| 73 | Rest areas (benches) |
| 74 | We enjoy the view, nature and atmosphere. |

10.5 APPENDIX E- MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY INTERNET FORUM

Full detail regarding open-ended comments can be found under separate cover, in an Excel spreadsheet format.

10.6 APPENDIX F- PEAK DEMOCRACY FORUM: COMMUNITY CREATES PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE FUTURE SURVEY

Full detail regarding survey results and open-ended comments can be found under separate cover, in an Excel spreadsheet format.