



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
Item: 6
Date: 07/18/19

July 11, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director, Department of Parks *MR*
Shuchi Vera, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks *SV*
Andy Frank, Division Chief, Park Development Division *RAF*

FROM: Judie Lai, Architectural Section Supervisor, Park Development Division *JL*
Wen Huang, Landscape Architect/Project Manager, Park Development Division *WH*

SUBJECT: Facility Plan for the Renovation of Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

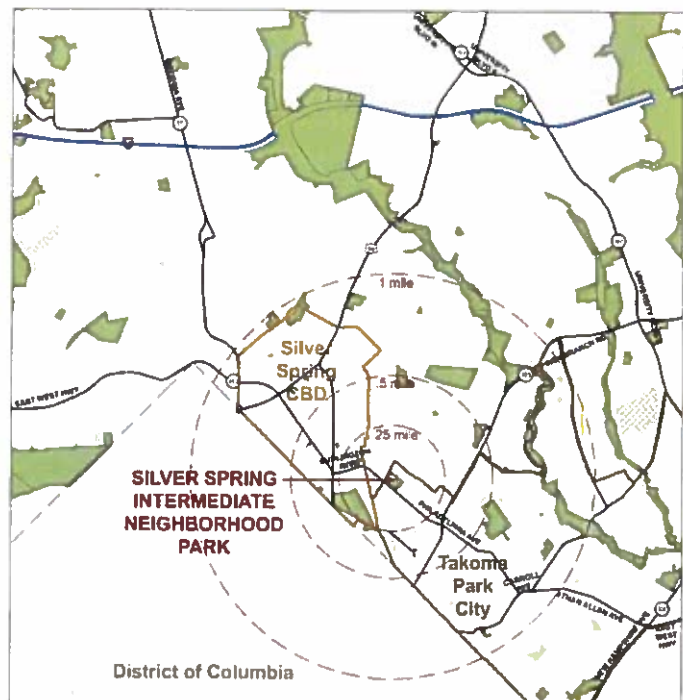
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED FACILITY PLAN, INCLUDING COST ESTIMATE.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

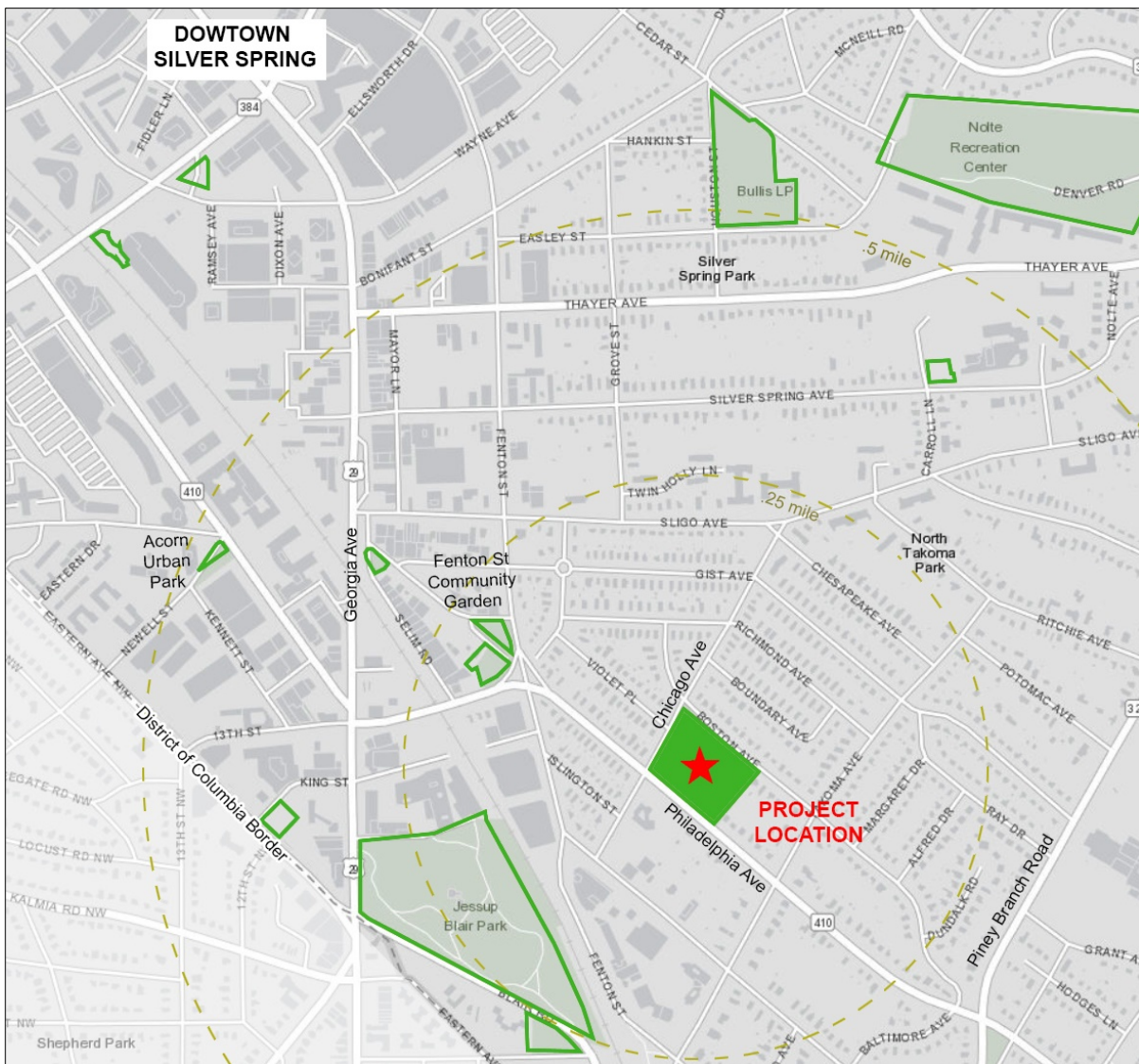
The purpose of this project is to prepare a facility plan for the renovation of Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park located at 7801 Chicago Avenue in the City of Takoma Park, Maryland. The intent of the project is to improve and activate the park to better serve the community while providing accessibility and stormwater management.

The 3.6-acre park is located on the northwestern edge of the City of Takoma Park. The park property has frontage on Chicago, Philadelphia, and Boston Avenues. Single family homes surround the park on three sides. Montgomery College's Takoma Park Campus is located on the southwest side of the park, across Philadelphia Avenue (MD410).



Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park is the site of a former Montgomery County Public School (MCPS). The park property is currently owned by Montgomery County and maintained by Montgomery Parks. At the time of this writing, the property is going through the County's land disposition process. It is the intent of the County and the Department of Parks that the land be conveyed to Parks. After the school buildings were demolished in the 1970s, the site was gradually developed as a park. The school's footprint is still evident in the site's grading including several retaining walls.

Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park is a popular, well-used park that has served the community for the past 40 years; however, the park is in need of renovation due to its aging infrastructure and the growing needs of the community. Additionally, it was developed before the enactment of laws requiring accessibility and stormwater treatment. As a result, the park is not accessible to people with physical limitations, has poor connections between facilities, and is repeatedly impacted by wide spread poor drainage and standing water following rain events. In addition, some of the existing retaining walls are failing and creating a safety concern for park users and immediate neighbors. Existing facilities include a parking lot, two basketball courts and two tennis courts that were installed in 1980s, a playground that was installed in 2001, and an open lawn area that is naturally divided into three informal play spaces by the existing grading.



Project Funding

Facility planning represents approximately thirty-percent complete construction documents, including a proposed design, cost estimate and determination of regulatory feasibility. The facility planning study for the project was funded with \$200,000 from the FY 2017-2019 Capital Improvements Program in the Urban Park Elements PDF 871540. If approved, the project would be funded for design and construction from the Park Refreshers PDF 871902.

LSG Landscape Architecture, Inc. was hired in September 2018 as the project's prime consultant with sub-consultant Clark Azar & Associates as civil engineers. Three public meetings were held to collect public input, each followed by an Open Town Hall on-line survey to further collect public feedback.

The site Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) and Forest Conservation Exemption were approved by the M-NCPPC Department of Planning on May 17, 2019. The Storm Water Management (SWM) Concept Plan was approved by City of Takoma Park Department of Public Works on March 11, 2019.

Facility Planning Process

The facility planning process includes the following sequence of work:

1. Collect data, prepare site survey and analyze existing site conditions.
2. Identify the program of requirements and priorities.
3. Develop park renovation concept alternatives based on site analysis.
4. Meet with the community to gather input and ideas for the park (community meeting #1).
5. Develop park renovation concept alternatives based on community feedbacks.
6. Present concept alternatives to the community and stakeholders (community meeting #2).
7. Develop park renovation plan based on input received.
8. Prepare and obtain approval of Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Conservation Exemption.
9. Perform geotechnical investigations.
10. Prepare stormwater management concept submission and obtain approval from City of Takoma Park City Department of Public Works.
11. Develop recommended plan based on feedback from the community and regulatory agencies (community meeting #3).
12. Finalize facility plan and prepare 30% construction documents and cost estimate.
13. Coordinate any outstanding issues with adjacent property owners and regulatory agencies.
14. Prepare facility plan staff report, cost estimate and operating budget estimates.
15. Present facility plan recommendations and costs to the Montgomery County Planning Board for approval.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Takoma Park Master Plan, Approved 2000

The 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan provides several recommendations that apply to Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park. The first of these is to “support the facilities and parks and protect the environmental resources that contribute to community identity and provide valuable services and programs” (page 8). It also recommends a balanced distribution of parks and facilities for a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and interests. On Page 9, it recommends “enhance[ing] pedestrian and bicycle access to...community facilities by improving pedestrian safety and providing wide, tree-lined sidewalks throughout the area. Provide connections from neighborhoods to parks and trails”.

The Master Plan identifies the need for more recreation facilities. Because this area is mostly developed, there are limited opportunities to provide additional facilities for the community. The recommendation for Silver Spring Intermediate Park is on page 74:

Consider adding facilities needed and desired by the community. The parking lot should remain open to provide off-street parking for park patrons. The basketball court gets heavy use and should be retained.

The Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan, Approved November 2018

The Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan is a comprehensive amendment to the 1978 Master Plan of Bikeways, 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan and all bikeway recommendations in past functional plans, area master plans and sector plans. The Plan sets forth a vision for Montgomery County as a world-class bicycling community, where people in all areas of the County have access to a comfortable, safe and connected bicycle network, and where bicycling is a viable transportation option that improves our quality of life. Page 352 of the plan identifies bikeways in the Silver Spring-Takoma Park East area. Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park is within 0.25 mile of the existing Metropolitan Branch Trail and the proposed shared roads along Takoma Ave on the south, and Gist Ave on the north.

2018 Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS FMP)

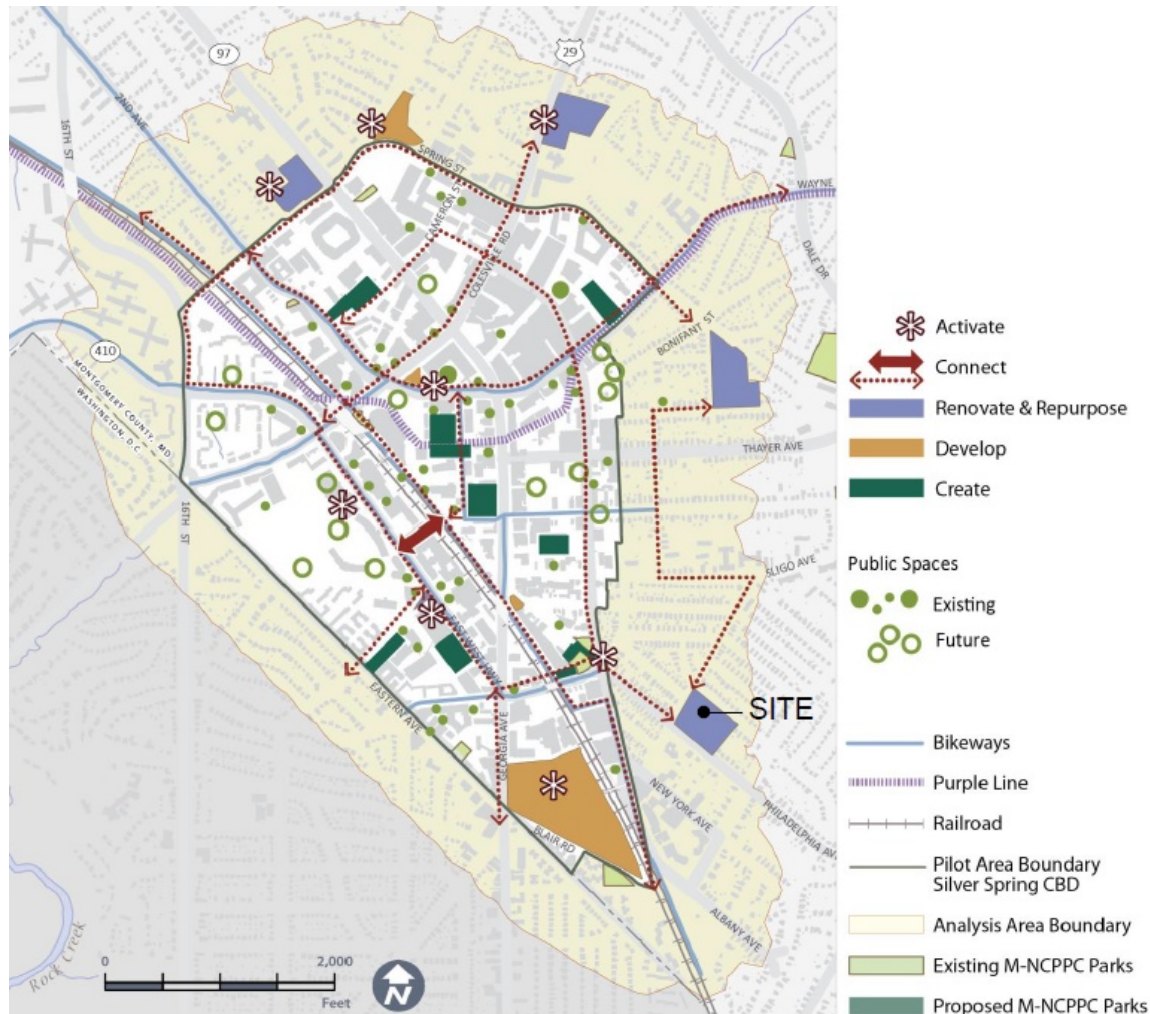
The Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS FMP) for Parks in Mixed Use and Higher Density Areas is a plan that applies an innovative methodology to identify areas with the highest need for



Silver Spring-Takoma Park (East) Bikeway Plan

parks and open spaces and recommend opportunities to increase the number of parks and open spaces in those communities. The Plan promotes public spaces as platforms where people can share experiences and build a sense of community. The Plan develops a methodology to ensure equity in parks and open spaces within specific geographic areas.

Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park is identified in the Silver Spring Pilot Area as a park for renovation and repurpose. It recommends to “improve service through renovation of current facilities” and that the park should provide active and contemplative benefits as the primary experience in the park (page 87). The summary map for the Silver Spring Pilot Area is on page 90 and shown below.



Summary Map, Silver Spring Pilot Area Implementation

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

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. The goals are outlined on page 5:

- *Optimize Existing Parks and Facilities: Utilize existing park and recreation facilities and lands more fully.*
- *Create Great, Activated Parks to Equitably Serve the County: Provide spaces and programs that bring people together.*
- *Steward and Interpret our Natural and Cultural Resources: Prioritize the management and protection of natural and cultural resources.*

Silver Spring Intermediate Park is classified as a Neighborhood Park, which is defined in the PROS Plan as “small parks providing informal recreation” in heavily populated residential areas. Typical facilities in a neighborhood park include playgrounds, play fields, sitting areas, shelters, tennis and multi-use courts, but no regulation size ballfields (page 35).

The 2017 PROS plan notes that Montgomery Parks is receiving more and more requests for pickleball. The recommended strategy is to provide this feature to an existing facility while keeping that facility’s original intent (page 108). The PROS Plan recommends reviewing the use pattern of existing hard surface courts such as tennis and basketball courts to identify opportunities for multiple uses such as futsal, as well as possibly re-purposing in some instances (pages 114 and 115).

The PROS Plan recommends a streamlined process to facilitate planning and design to respond to changing community needs and interests, which supports the intention of this project within the Park Refresher PDF.

Vision 2030: The Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan, Approved and Adopted June 2011

Vision 2030 is a strategic plan for park and recreation services in Montgomery County for the next twenty years. The Plan confirmed that the highest needs for outdoor spaces are and will continue to be in areas of highest population density. Silver Spring Intermediate Park is located in Silver Spring within the South-Central planning area. Volume 2 of the Plan (page 63) indicates that the South-Central area has the lowest level of service of all planning areas for parks and recreation compared to the density of population, even though this area shows a relatively high concentration and access to recreational facilities.

Vision 2030 identifies ten top priorities for program improvement, expansion, or additions, of which four are related to Silver Spring Intermediate Park. The Priority #1 is exercise and fitness, #6 is health and wellness, #7 is outdoor nature, and #8 is children and youth activities (page 18 of Volume 2). The top four facilities that are rated the highest importance in the Vision 2030 survey are: trails, natural areas, playgrounds, and recreation centers (page 22 of Volume 2).

One of the goals of Vision 2030 is to create a high-functioning system of parks that is responsive to changing community needs and interests (page 27 of Volume 2). It recommends flexible spaces that address the community’s current needs and emerging trends.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park is located at 7801 Chicago Avenue in Takoma Park, Maryland. The park is approximately two (2) miles south of the Capital Beltway, one (1) mile south of downtown Silver Spring, half (0.5) mile east of the District of Columbia boundary along Philadelphia Avenue, and borders the northwest edge of the City of the Takoma Park off Chicago Avenue.



This 3.6-acre park is bordered by Chicago Avenue to the northwest, Philadelphia Avenue (State Highway MD 410) to the southwest, and Boston Avenue to the northeast. Existing park facilities include a 21-space parking lot, two basketball courts with fences, two tennis courts with fences, a playground, mature tree groves, and an un-programmed open lawn area for flexible activities.

The park parcel was the former site of Silver Spring Intermediate School. Following demolition of the school buildings in the 1970s, amenities such as basketball courts, tennis courts, and a playground were gradually installed in the park from the 1980s until early 2000. The 21-space parking lot was built for the school's gymnasium, which remained in operation for several years after the remainder of the school was demolished. The gym was demolished and turned into a rectangular open lawn area in the 1980s.

Evidence of the school's footprint can still be seen in the site's undulating topography and retaining walls. Poor drainage as a result of the unchanged grading from the school building causes frequent water ponding and saturated ground conditions after rain events.

Many mature trees remain from the site's previous use as a school. The steep slope along Philadelphia Avenue (MD 410) is covered in dense, invasive vegetation that significantly limits visibility into the park and constricts the already narrow sidewalk along the western edge of the park. The City of Takoma Park is planning to improve and repave the sidewalk along MD410.

There are four entrances into the park, but none provides an accessible route to the park's amenities. The major entrance to the park is via the parking lot off Chicago Ave. The second entrance is from the bus stop on Philadelphia Ave. The third entrance is through a set of stairs, which is a remnant from the former gymnasium building, located near Chicago Avenue near the intersection of Boston Avenue. The fourth entrance off Boston Avenue leads to the playground. Within the park, steep slopes and stairs limit accessibility to several of the park's amenities.

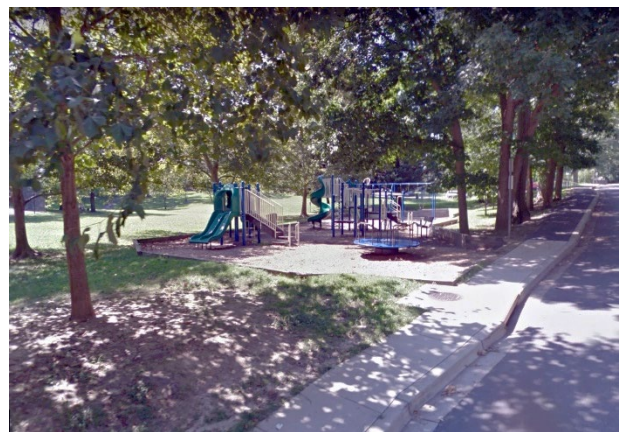
The playground is well used by the community. Currently the playground is isolated from other features within the park due to the lack of a paved connection. Seating is limited to one bench located near the entrance. Movable picnic tables are scattered outside of the playground, often their locations are inconvenient for users. The playground is located right next to Boston Avenue, separated from the street via a four-foot wide sidewalk, with no fence or safety barriers to prevent children from running into the street.

The park includes three retaining walls including a timber seat wall next to the basketball courts, a cracking concrete block wall near the location of the former gymnasium building, and a veneered concrete block wall in the northwest corner of the park next to a residential property. Permission from the homeowner will be necessary in order to access their driveway to rebuild the wall. It is noted that a portion of the apparently long existing driveway is located within park property. The guardrails on both concrete block walls are not compliant to the building code.

Prior to the development of this area, there was a natural stream channel on this site. The channel was later converted to underground storm pipe system which is still exists under the park and sometimes contribute to the flooding during intense rain. In addition, the park has limited on-site stormwater management. Many areas within the park suffer from ponding water and saturated ground after major rain events due to the poor grading of the site. The path leading to the tennis courts is often inundated with water. Interim measures have been installed to alleviate the drainage problems while the facility awaits renovation.



View from the bus stop on Philadelphia Avenue



View from Boston Avenue



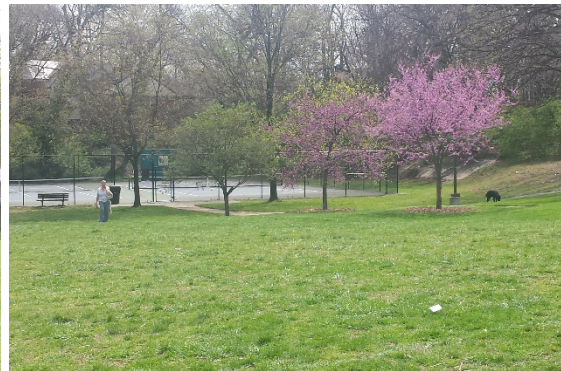
View to the open green space and the central stepped walkway



View from northwest entrance



View to the open green space and playground



View to the open green space and tennis courts

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

M-NCPPC staff have met with the community several times over the past year to obtain input. The first public meeting was held in April 2018 to gather initial ideas. Preliminary concept alternatives were presented to the community in June 2018. A recommended plan was shared with the community in January 2019, and an updated plan, revised based on community input was presented to the community in May 2019. In an effort to reach the entire community, each meeting was followed by an Open Town Hall forum on-line survey. Comprehensive notes from all community meetings and Open Town Hall forum discussions, as well as residents' email correspondents with the Project Manager are included in Attachment 9 and 10.

Community Outreach During Project Initiation - Meeting 1

The first community meeting was held on April 18, 2018. Existing conditions, the park background and a list of observed issues were presented by staff. Two preliminary concept plans were presented to begin the discussion. An overview of the process and schedule was discussed.

The two concept plans brought up some ideas of new facilities including a shade structure, dog trail, exercise stations, sledding hill, loop path, and viewing and seating areas.

Except for the sledding hill, which according to the community already exists in the park and is very popular in the winter, all other facilities proposed by staff did not receive much positive support.

Option 1



Option 2



Below are the key comments raised by the community during and after the meeting:

- Many residents agree one of the most critical issues in the park is drainage
- Residents cherish the park trees and unobstructed green open space
- Residents expressed a concern that the park not become too manicured or overly programmed with facilities. They asked that accessible paths be minimized and not dissect the park's open space
- Many residents expressed concerns about the proposal to eliminate any parking spaces

Community Outreach During Project Initiation - Meeting 2

The second community meeting was held on June 12, 2018. There were thirty-five (35) attendees.

After the first community meeting, it was clear to the design team that the community was generally satisfied with the existing park. Rather than adding new amenities, the community recommended that the park renovation focus on improving the existing facilities within the park.

Four alternatives were developed and presented to the community. The improvement program for all four options are listed below.

General Improvements

Parking Lot:

- Remove excessive pavement beyond what is necessary for parking
- Provide (1) accessible parking space and aisle
- Identify designated location for portable toilet
- Provide bike racks near the parking lot

Retaining Walls:

- Improve the guardrails on the retaining walls to meet building code while maintaining the feeling of openness
- Fix the failing retaining wall in the east corner of the park

Basketball Courts:

- Replace the failing timber retaining wall adjacent to the basketball courts and convert it to an attractive seat wall
- Increase the fence height to 10 feet
- Add fixed tables/benches
- Add additional trash and recycling containers
- Add shade tree(s) to the west side grass area at the courts

Tennis Courts:

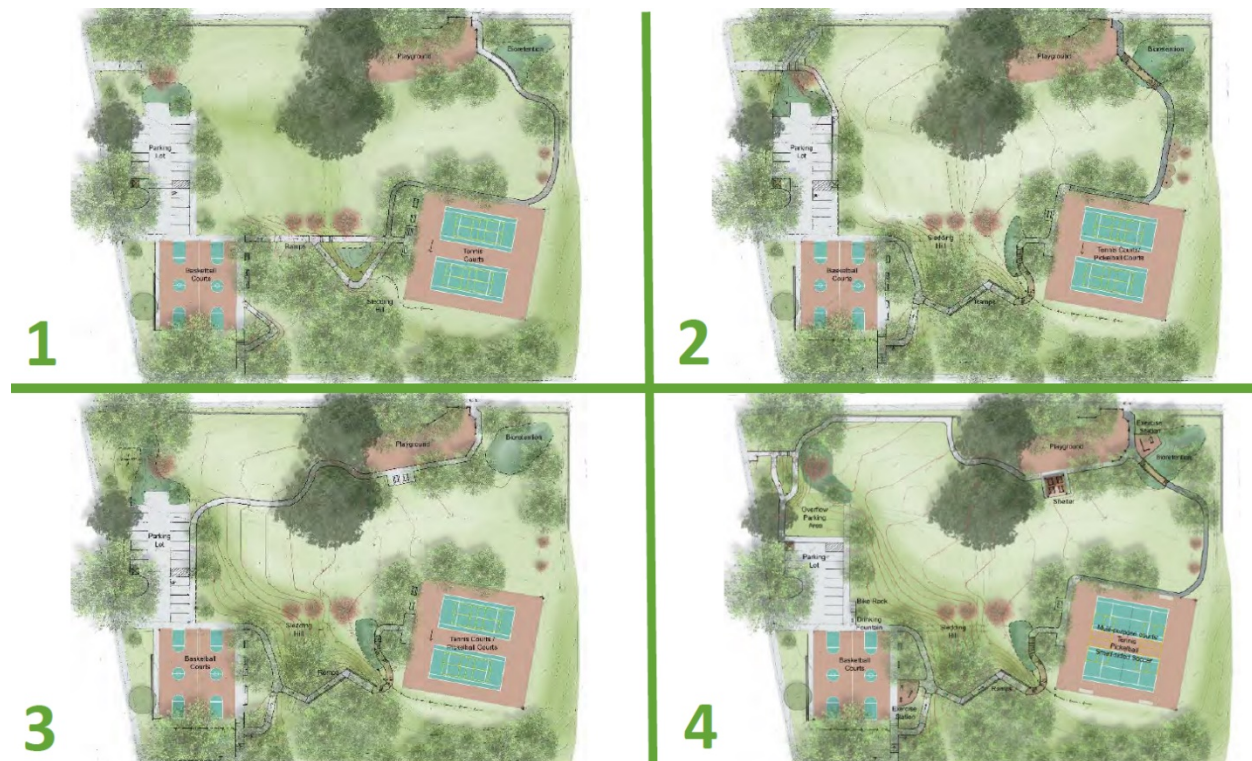
- Resurface, relevel and regrade the existing courts
- Add a pickleball overlay
- Enlarge the backboard

Playground:

- Add a fence adjacent to Boston Avenue to increase safety
- Identify a new entrance location to the playground

Drainage/Stormwater Management:

- Provide Stormwater treatment for impervious areas
- Provide a drainage swale on the south side of the courts to eliminate standing water
- Repair the main inlet in the east corner
- Provide erosion control along the steep slope parallel to the Philadelphia Avenue sidewalk

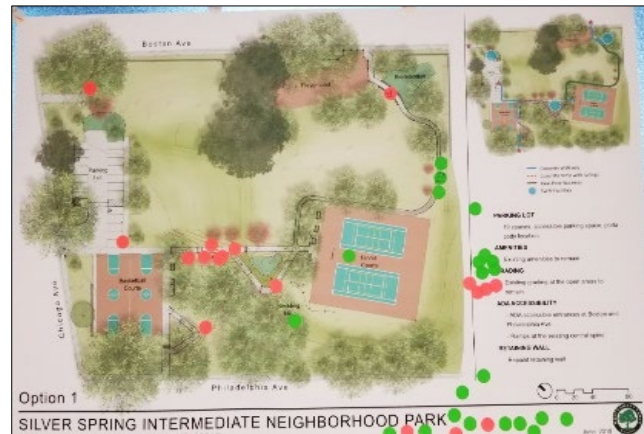


The distinctive ideas of each option are listed below.

Option 1

Option 1 provides the minimum improvements that meet ADA accessibility and SWM requirements.

- No grading changes for the existing open green area.
- Existing central walkway with steps is converted to accessible walkway with ramps and handrails.
- A new walkway is proposed to connect the Boston Ave entrance at the playground to the central walkway.
- A simple paint pattern for the existing white retaining wall is proposed



Option 2

Option 2 provides moderate improvements.

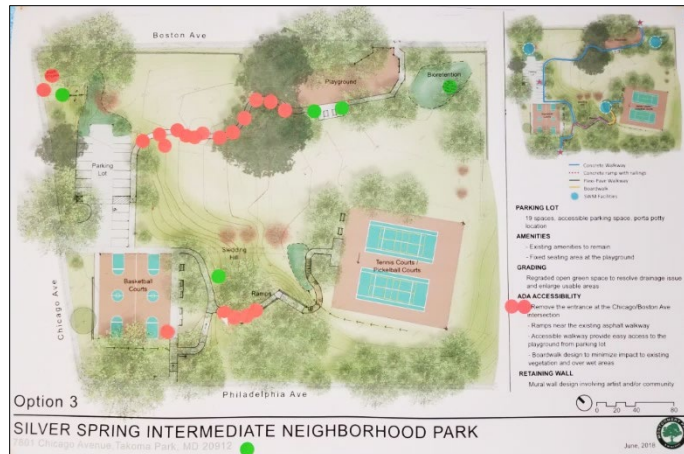
- Re-grading of the open green space will address standing water issues, but otherwise changes to the area are minimal in order to retain most of the existing character of the space.
- The central walkway will be removed. An accessible walkway with ramps and railings is proposed near the location of the existing asphalt walkway.
- Accessible walkway connections to all four entrances at the perimeter of the open green space.
- Elevated wooden boardwalk is introduced to minimize impacts to tree roots and function as a bridge in flatter areas with the potential for standing water.
- The entrance at the intersection of Chicago/Boston Avenue will be reconfigured to become wide seating steps
- Mural wall design will be incorporated in this option



Option 3

Option 3 also provides moderate improvements, similar to Option 2, but eliminates the entrance at the intersection of Chicago/Boston Avenue and provides a more direct access to the playground from the parking lot. Other proposed improvements include:

- Fixed picnic tables at the side of the playground
- Flatter and enlarged open green area for multi-functional use



Option 4

Option 4 offers the most extensive improvements.

- The parking lot pavement will be reduced to 10 car spaces and 1 accessible parking space. The eliminated pavement will be converted to grass overflow parking which can fit approximately 10 additional cars.
- A 500' long looped walkway is proposed within the park boundary and is fully ADA accessible. The walkway connects all park entrances and all amenities in the park.
- Natural play areas are proposed adjacent to the playground by using boulders, tree trunks and other natural materials. The natural play components will be combined with the boardwalk and bio-retention area.
- A shade structure that can fit in 4 picnic tables at the edge of the playground will be included.
- Two exercise stations are proposed, one closer to the playground with static type of equipment, the other near basketball court with dynamic type of equipment
- The tennis courts will be converted to multi-purpose courts for tennis, pickleball and small-sided soccer games
- A drinking fountain will be installed near basketball court
- The open green area will be regraded to obtain more usable flat areas with better drainage



The meeting attendees voted on the options by using different color dots to select their preferred (green dot) and undesired (red dot) options, design components, and (10) proposed amenities. The results are shown in the above concept plan images. The combination of Option 1 and 2 was preferred by the attendees. Each received 11 votes among 35 attendants.

There were also additional amenities that the residents wanted to incorporate into the overall improvements. The voting results are shown in the image on the right.

The preferred amenities are:

- 1) bike racks
- 2) drinking fountain
- 3) retaining wall resurfacing (either paint or mural wall)
- 4) multi-purpose courts
- 5) natural play

And the undesired amenities are:

- 1) Seating steps
- 2) Shade structure
- 3) Exercise stations (any type)



The Open Town Hall Forum on-line survey following Meeting #2, however, showed a different preference for the options. Among 116 responses, 59 selected Option 4 as the preferred option. The preferred amenities are consistent with the community meeting voting.

Which of the four (4) Concept Plan Options best represents the vision that you see for Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Concept Plan 1	<div style="width: 27.6%;"></div>	27.6%	32
Concept Plan 2	<div style="width: 15.5%;"></div>	15.5%	18
Concept Plan 3	<div style="width: 2.6%;"></div>	2.6%	3
Concept Plan 4	<div style="width: 50.9%;"></div>	50.9%	59
I don't have a preferred option	<div style="width: 3.4%;"></div>	3.4%	4

Community Outreach During Design Phase – Meeting 3

Prior to this meeting, a recommended concept plan was shared with the community through an Open Town Hall on-line forum in January 2019. The plan refined prior Options 2 and 4 based on community feedback, maintained the proposed accessibility and stormwater management improvements in the park, introduced safety measures around the playground, seating area and nature play area next to the playground, and added pickleball paint lines to increase the usage of the tennis courts. 84 responses were received and over half of the survey participants rated overall satisfaction with the plan; however, a quarter of the participants expressed disappointment with the exclusion of futsal from the multi-purpose court.

Montgomery Parks revisited the area and re-evaluated the sports courts within one-mile walking distance of the Silver Spring Intermediate Park. A total of nine (9) tennis courts exist but no futsal opportunities were located.

Since there are no other planned or funded park renovation opportunities in this area in the near future, the proposed improvements at Silver Spring Intermediate Park provide an excellent opportunity to increase the area's equity and the park's ability to serve more people with differing needs while maintaining the park's unique characters, open space, and mature trees. Accordingly, Parks proposes to convert one tennis court to a futsal court in response to the community's feedback.

The project team has also met with Takoma Park City's Urban Arborist and Montgomery County Planning Department's Forest Conservation plan reviewer and made additional adjustments to the previous concept plan to better protect the significant trees in the park.

The third community meeting was held on May 29, 2019 to present the recommended design development plan for public input. The plan refined the previously shared recommended concept plan based on community request as well as input from regulatory agencies.

The overall framework of the existing park is carefully preserved but every experience receives improvement and enhancement to make the park more enjoyable to people of all ages, abilities and interests.



Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

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The presentation and recommended park plan were generally well-received. In general, the residents were satisfied that the un-programmed open space and preservation of mature trees in the plan.

The discussion after the presentation was mainly focused on the proposed multi-purpose courts. Some citizens were concerned that the two tennis courts were divided. Some questioned if there

were more suitable sites for futsal. Other community members were concerned about the parking capacity of the park with added activities. Some suggested adding more function to the courts and proposed an on-site equipment storage “library”. Many residents were supportive of the futsal court and the idea of turning tennis courts to multi-functional courts used for tennis, pickleball, futsal, volleyball, and other sport activities.

The construction schedule was briefly discussed. Residents were concerned with extended closure of the park during the construction, as kids would not be able to use the playground during that time. Parks will explore the possibility of scheduling the construction to minimize the closure time of the playground, if it does not add significant cost or delays to the project.

AGENCY COORDINATION AND REGULATORY APPROVALS

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

M-NCPPC Montgomery County Department of Parks and Department of Planning

Staff met with various internal stakeholders within the M-NCPPC throughout the facility planning process as part of the Planning, Design, Construction and Operations (PDCO) team process. This included staff from Area 1 Planning, Cultural Resources Stewardship, Park Police, Facility Management, Southern Region, Urban Forestry, Accessibility Team, Environmental Engineering and Public Affairs and Community Partnerships.

M-NCPPC Department of Planning

A Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Conservation Exemption was approved on May 17, 2019 (File #42019125E) for the renovation of the park. Refer to Attachments 3 for the approved plan.

City of Takoma Park Department of Public Works/Engineering

The stormwater management concept plan for the park was approved on March 11, 2019 (File #SWC-19-02-07). The plan proposes to fully meet on-site stormwater management goals for the limit of disturbance via implementation of two micro-bioretenment areas. The stormwater management design strategy for this project was to seek to replicate the natural hydrology of the site by utilizing small-scale stormwater management practices to minimize the impact of land development on downstream water resources. Refer to Attachments 4 for the approved plans.

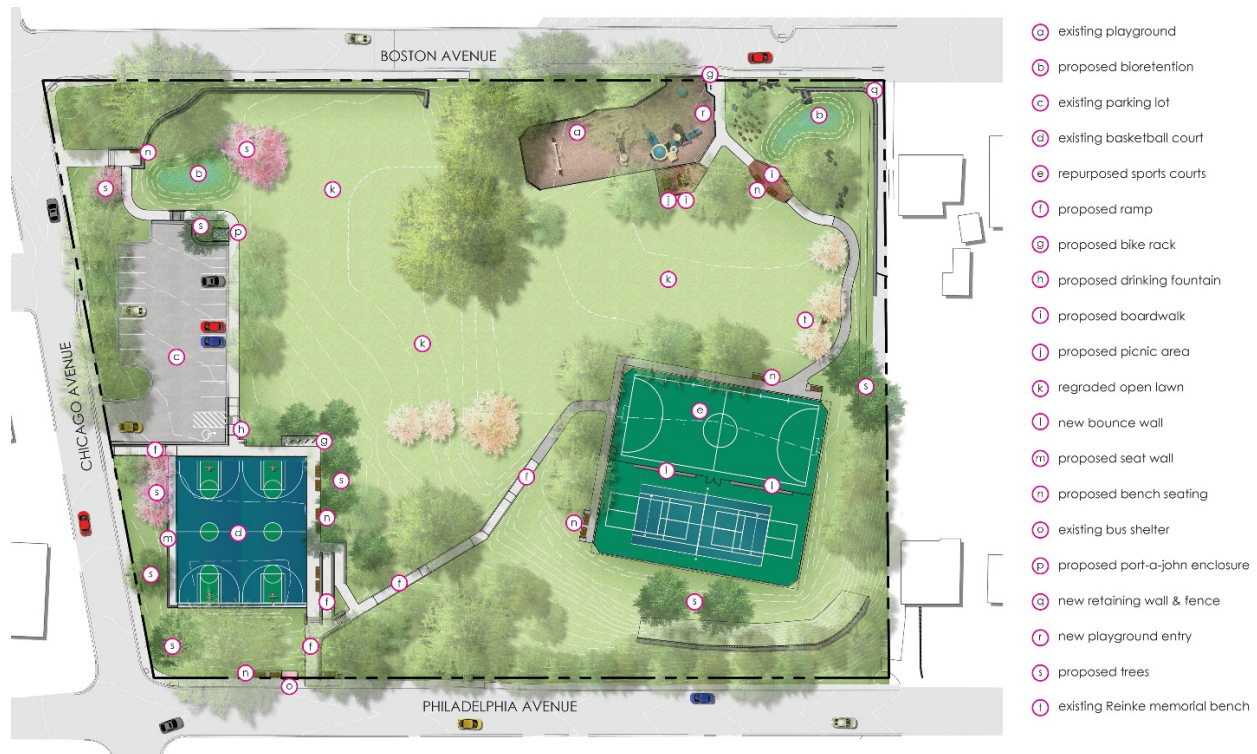
City of Takoma Park Department of Public Works

The sidewalk along Philadelphia Avenue (MDSHA 410) is only 4' wide. There are dense urban woods and overgrown underlayer shrubs and groundcover that further narrows down walkable surfaces. Montgomery Parks had hired a landscape contractor in August 2017 to clean up the non-native invasive plants along the sidewalk and coordinated with the City of Takoma Park about the sidewalk improvements. Please refer to Attachment 5 for the coordination.

Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

A Notice of Intent (NOI) was submitted to Maryland Department of the Environment for a permit for land disturbance associated with construction activity (File #MDRCP04BP). It was released for Public Notice until 3/29/2019, with comment: Nothing further at this time. Refer to Attachment 6 for the notification comments.

RECOMMENDED FACILITY PLAN



The Recommended Facility Plan for Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park seeks to preserve and enhance the significant natural features of the site while satisfying the recreational needs and leisure enjoyment of park users, with proposed improvements which will serve the community well into the future.

After analysis of the existing park constraints and thorough coordination with the community, the plan aspires to provide a cohesive framework that supports the community needs; offer a viable park experience; protect and enhance the existing significant trees and cherished open space; provide aesthetic stormwater management to restore healthy site hydrology and incorporate the principles of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) in design solutions to achieve a safer and more accessible park space.

The existing park and amenities are generally popular and well used by the community. A major staff objective during the Design Development process was to maintain the overall character and nature of the existing site and to improve the user experience on existing and proposed amenities.

The parking lot will remain as a supplement to available off-street parking. Many single-family houses around the park don't have private garages and rely on street parking, therefore, the existing parking lot is necessary for park patrons, especially during the weekends when there is heavy use of the park.

Nearly one third of the park site is a continuous open lawn area which is very valuable in the high-population urban setting and cherished by the community. Much of the public feedback received during the project review specifically pointed out that non-programmed, un-structured and flexible open space is the greatest asset of this park. The space will be preserved for free play.

The wooded portion of the site is a valuable site amenity and provides important urban forest to the park as well as the city. The mature trees along Philadelphia Avenue provide visual barrier and excellent noise reduction. The tree grove around the playground provides shade and extends the play area. The Facility Plan proposes to preserve as many existing trees as possible.

The basketball courts in the park are heavily used. The Southern Region of Montgomery Parks made some improvements in summer 2017, including resurfacing and painting the court, new hoops, and 8-foot high chain-link fences. These improvements received countless compliments from the community. The tennis courts will also stay at their current location. The courts are already well used by the community for multiple functions including tennis, riding bicycles, playing soccer, walking dogs, and free running for toddlers, etc. The playground was built in 2001 and will receive safety improvements.

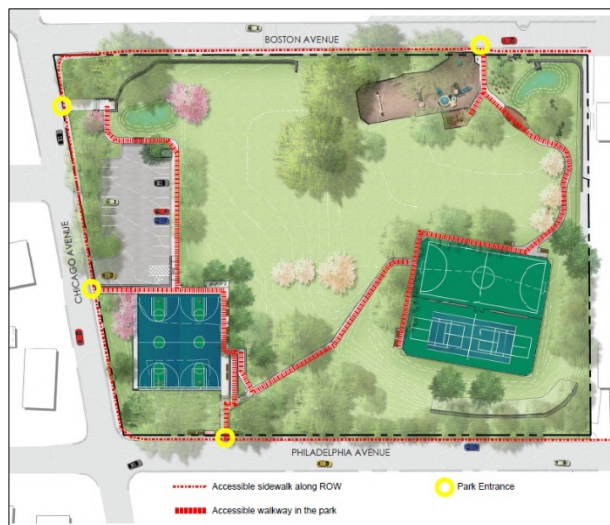
A complete set of 30% design plans is included in [Attachment 1](#). A full version site rendering plan is included in [Attachment 2](#).

The proposed site improvements include the following key elements:

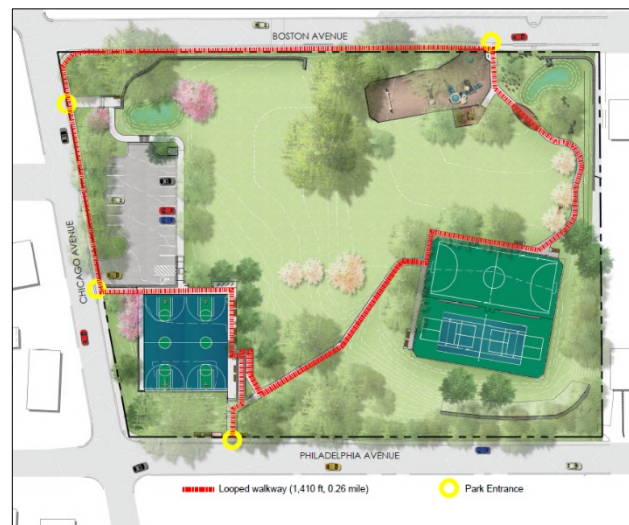
1. Walkway

Three of the four park entrances will have an accessible walkway and ramps that connect in to the various park amenities. The walkway links the parking lot, the bus stop, the courts, and playground.

One of the entrances at the intersection of Chicago Avenue and Boston Avenue will be redesigned to have fewer steps, with a new walkway connection to the parking lot and the remainder of the park. This improvement will make the entrance safer and provide a seating and viewing area overlooking the open lawn.



Accessible Walkway (on the existing sidewalk, and in the park)



Accessible Looped Walkway (1,410 ft, 0.26 mile)

The walkway materials will include concrete, boardwalk, and flexible porous pavement which will drain stormwater and protect tree roots. The proposed walkway materials protect existing trees and make the park and its amenities fully accessible while providing an interesting walking/biking experience.

2. Stormwater Management:

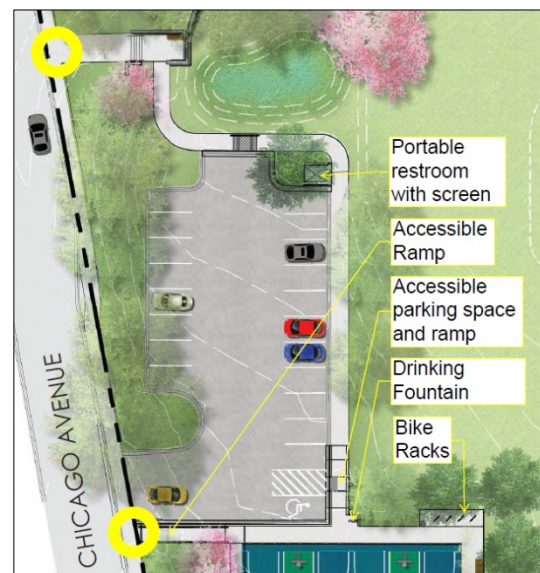
One of the important goals of the park renovation is to reduce ponding water in the park and treat the stormwater runoff within the park property. Two micro-bioretention areas are proposed to treat stormwater runoff on-site. The treatment areas will be located next to the parking lot and next to the playground, the lowest part of the entire park. New inlets and swales are also proposed to better collect the stormwater runoff.

The grading of the open green space was inconsistent after the school buildings were demolished, resulting in some areas with drainage problems. The Facility Plan proposes to regrade the open lawn area to optimize the drainage and to create a consistent and user-friendly play area.

3. Parking lot:

The parking lot has twenty (20) spaces, with nineteen (19) regular parking spaces and one (1) accessible parking space. Other parking lot improvements include:

- New ADA accessible parking space
- Accessible walkway connection from Chicago Avenue to the park facilities, as well as connection to the Boston/Chicago Avenue entrance
- Designated location for portable restroom with screen
- New drinking fountain
- New bike racks (4)



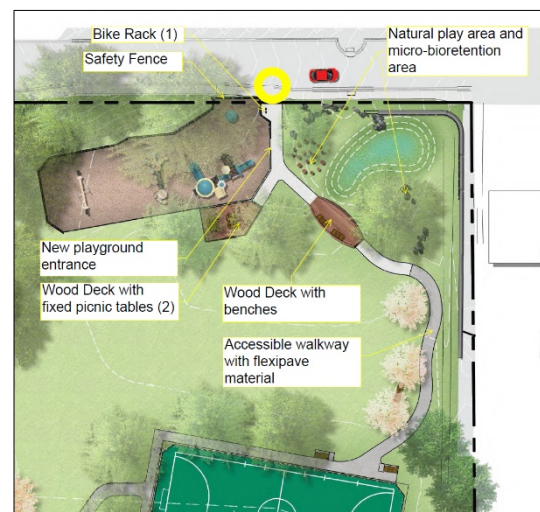
4. Bus Stop:

The bus stop serves as one of the points of arrival to the park. The Facility Plan removes the existing steps, adds accessible walkway linkage into the park, and proposes additional benches adjoining the bus stop to enlarge the waiting area.

5. Playground:

The existing playground was built in 2001 and is in good condition. The park renovation does not include any change to the play equipment but focuses on safety and usability. A new natural play area will extend the playground area and allow park users to mingle around the micro-bioretention area, which increases the interaction between play and nature elements. The improvements around the playground include:

- Accessible entrance to the playground
- New safety fences along Boston Avenue
- New fixed tables on a wood deck next to the playground and new benches



- d. New natural play area and boardwalk near the existing playground and the new bioretention area
- e. New bike rack (1)

6. Courts:

Basketball courts will get taller fences, a seat wall will be improved on the Chicago Avenue side and additional benches will be installed on the other side of the court area. Trees will be planted on the west side of the court to provide additional shade.

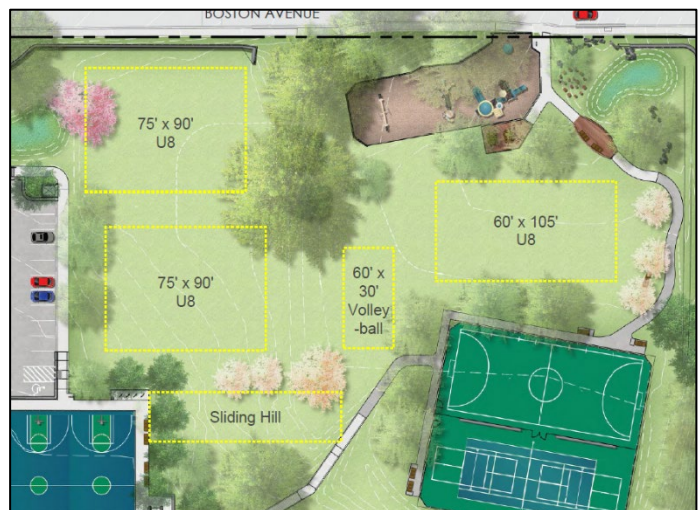
The tennis courts will be re-purposed to multi-purpose courts in response to the community's feedback. One tennis court will become the tennis and pickleball court with lines for both sports painted. As proposed, the project will convert the other tennis court to a futsal court which can be used for volleyball and other open sport activities. A new chain-link fence in the center divides the courts to serve for different types of activities. There will also be new practice walls installed on the fence. New benches and walkways outside of the courts provide better viewing experience and better access to the courts.



7. Open Lawn Area:

The park's big open lawn area is cherished by the community. It supports multiple unprogrammed flexible recreational use, as well as leisure activities with mature trees and shades that will be preserved. The natural grading forms the lawn area into several spaces that can fit in three youth soccer play fields, a volleyball area and a sliding hill.

The grading of the lawn area will be improved to receive better drainage and grade transition between different areas. By removing the central stepped walkway, the lawn area is enlarged to accommodate more flexible usage. The playfields will be re-turfed, and the sliding hill will receive turf reinforcement for better and smoother play experience.



8. Retaining Walls:

The retaining wall on the southeast corner of the park along Boston Avenue is adjacent to a resident's driveway. There are significant cracks and some portions of the wall are out of plumb.

The entire retaining wall will be replaced and rebuilt with new guardrail on the top of the wall to comply with building code.

The white retaining wall next to the open play area along Boston Avenue has some cracks, but is in relatively good condition. This wall is often used as a practice wall by children playing soccer. This wall will be spot repaired with new white paint and guardrail. A mural wall was discussed in the community meetings and the community has differing opinions on whether this wall should remain white or be painted. The idea will be further developed in a later stage.

COST ESTIMATES

Estimated Construction Costs

A summary of construction costs is outlined in the table below. A detailed cost estimate is included in [Attachment 7](#).

Item	Total Cost
Site Preparation and Demolition	\$120,500
Tree Care and Protection	\$66,000
Sediment and Erosion Control	\$27,000
Grading/Earthwork	\$66,000
Stormwater Management & Drainage	\$89,700
Utilities (MEP & lighting)	\$12,000
Vehicular Pavement	\$15,500
Hardscape (Paving, walls, boardwalk & steps)	\$450,800
Site Amenities (playground, furnishings, signage, railing and fences)	\$257,600
Landscape Improvements	\$44,400
CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	\$1,149,500
Construction Contingency (15% of Construction Subtotal)	\$172,500
CONSTRUCTION TOTAL (Subtotal plus Contingency)	\$1,322,000
Design Cost with Contingency	\$185,000
Staff Chargebacks for Detail Design (30% of Design Contract)	\$56,000
Construction Management & Inspections (5% of Construction Total)	\$60,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$1,623,000

This preliminary cost estimate is based on the Facility Plan. Some design components may need to be modified pending site condition and constraints, as well as regulatory jurisdiction requirements. The design justification is to be evaluated at Detailed Design stage and may impact the cost estimate.

Operating Budget Impact

Annual operating budget costs to maintain the renovated park are expected to increase. Increased maintenance costs are associated with the new stormwater management facilities, improved open lawn area, additional walkway and furniture. The total operating budget is estimated at \$43,000 per year. A detailed estimate is included in [Attachment 8](#).

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Facility Plan and associated cost estimate. Silver Spring Intermediate Park is an urban oasis, an important community gathering and leisure location in the East Silver Spring and the North Takoma Park neighborhood. Renovation and activation of the park will protect public spaces in a densely developed urban area with high need for open space, promote social equity and accessibility for the neighborhood, and serve the community's current and future needs. The renovated park will support recreational needs and healthy communities, and provide greater environmental sustainability. If approved, the project will be included in the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program for design and construction.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 30% Construction Documents
2. Site Plan and Perspective Renderings
3. Natural Resources Inventory / Forest Conservation Exemption and Approval Letter
4. Stormwater Management Concept and Approval Letter
5. Coordination with City of Takoma Park for Philadelphia Avenue sidewalk improvement
6. Notice of Intent for Public Notice
7. Detailed Cost Estimate
8. Operating Budget Impact
9. Community Meeting and Open Town Hall On-line Forum Reports
10. Resident Feedback Emails