



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

MCPB Date: 10/22/2020  
Agenda Item #3

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 15, 2020

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *MR*  
Miti Figueredo, Deputy Director of Administration *Miti*  
John Nissel, Deputy Director of Operations  
Shuchi Vera, Chief, Management Services Division *S.V.*

FROM: Nancy Steen, Budget Manager, Management Services Division *NCS*

SUBJECT: Department of Parks FY22 Proposed Operating Budget for the Park Fund

---

**Staff Recommendation**

Approval to prepare the FY22 Park Fund operating budget at the Base Budget plus Program Enhancements level.

**Background**

At its September 10 meeting, the Planning Board received a presentation from the Central Administrative Services (CAS) staff on the FY22 budget process including key trends and the budget outlook, strategy, and timeline.

John Kroll, Corporate Budget Manager, reported that the assessable base for Montgomery County continued to grow by 23% from FY14-FY21 gradually continuing to reverse the declining trends that were encountered in FY11-FY13. The Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimates that the assessable base will grow by 2.49% in FY22. Preliminary projections indicate that this growth will provide an increase in property tax revenue for the Park Fund that will meet our projected needs without an increase in the Park tax rate. However, the County Council can approve any expenditure level for the Park Fund that it desires, and then have the Park Fund tax rate set accordingly without requiring a change in the overall property tax rate.

The Planning Board then provided general guidance for developing the FY22 Budget with the recognition that the Department of Parks has mandated requirements and other essential needs to operate our park system. The Board asked that we request what is needed to provide the services that the Planning Board and the County Council have requested of us, being cognizant of the County's fiscal challenges and the likely impact that these challenges will have on our eventual budget. The Planning Board also emphasized that any requests for program enhancements and/or critical needs be well described and justified.

### **Known Increases**

At the September 10 meeting, CAS provided preliminary estimates for increases associated with the Park Fund for salaries, benefits, retirement, Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), and debt service on general obligation bonds. Since that time, we have continued to review and to refine these estimates. The FY22 projected change for compensation (excluding the markers for merit/COLA and reclassification) is a reduction of \$1,091,548, a 1.0% change. Included in that compensation total is a decrease of \$959,862 for pension costs. Note that this pension amount may change when the updated actuarial results are received in November. Based on favorable interest rates and refinancing of older debt, our debt service on general obligation bonds for CIP projects is decreasing for FY22 by \$364,352. In addition, the transfer to the CIP from the Park Fund is increasing from \$350,000 to \$450,000. This additional \$100K is for current revenue for the Facility Planning Local Parks PDF. This increase in the transfer amount is also included in the proposed CIP budget.

The Department of Parks also has known inflationary, contractual, and mandated increases as well as increases for operating budget impacts (OBI) for CIP projects and developer-built parks. The OBI increases total \$251,228 (0.2% over the FY21 adopted budget). Additional information on these increases is provided later in this memo. Of that total, \$11,622 is related to the Water Quality Protection Fund (WQPF), and if approved, will be offset by increased revenue from that Fund.

**The overall increase in major known commitments totals \$767,528 which is a 0.7% increase over the FY21 adopted budget.**

### **Budget Preparation**

To prepare for the October 22 Planning Board meeting, Parks staff worked diligently over the past three months identifying deficiencies in our work program as well as looking at emerging trends to determine the needs of the future. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the County's fiscal situation resulted in a "same service" level budget for FY21. Therefore, several program enhancements that were not funded in FY21 but are still deemed as essential needs were prioritized for inclusion in the FY22 budget request. Additional requests were received from the divisions, considered by the Director and Deputy Directors and narrowed down to the most important ones that address the top priorities of the Department. **The funding required for these program enhancement requests totals \$1,654,695 and includes 10 positions.**

### **Budget Summary**

**After the review of our Major Known Commitments as well as the Program Enhancements that we are proposing, the total increase for our Department for FY22 is \$2,422,223, a 2.3% increase over the FY21 budget.** This total includes an increase in Program Enhancements of \$314,300 for the department's portion of the Commission-Wide IT fund and CIO Allocation. Excluded from this total is the salary marker for the merit/COLA and the reclassifications.

<b>MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS</b>				
<b>FY22 OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST</b>				
			%	# of
			Change	Positions
	<b>FY21 Adopted Budget</b>	\$ 106,681,875		
<b>FY22 BASE BUDGET INCREASES</b>				
	Salary/Benefit/Pension increases (excluding salary markers) *	(1,091,548)	-1.0%	
	OBI	239,606	0.2%	2.0
	Contractual Increases	343,995	0.3%	
	Utilities/Telecommunications	(13,403)	0.0%	
	Inflationary Increases for Supplies and Materials, Services and Capital Outlay	256,535	0.2%	
	Debt Service for Internal Service Fund Capital Equipment	1,054,357	1.0%	
	Risk Management	(20,200)	0.0%	
	CAS Charges (Chargebacks, etc.)	131,171	0.1%	
	Chargebacks (CIP/Enterprise/Special Revenue Funds/Wheaton HQ)	51,849	0.0%	
	Transfer to Debt Service	(364,352)	-0.3%	
	CIP PAYGO	100,000	0.1%	
	Water Quality Fund	79,518	0.1%	2.0
	<b>Subtotal Increase - Base Budget Request</b>	<b>\$ 767,528</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>PROPOSED CHANGES - PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS</b>				
	Improving Customer Service	64,610	0.1%	1.0
	Improving Quality and Playability of Ballfields	282,358	0.3%	3.0
	Legislative Mandate	398,682	0.4%	3.0
	Maintain and Improve What We Have	387,880	0.4%	2.0
	Park Activation	65,000	0.1%	
	Social Equity	141,865	0.1%	1.0
	Dept. share of Commission-wide IT Initiatives (CWIT)	314,300	0.3%	
	<b>Subtotal Program Enhancements</b>	<b>\$ 1,654,695</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>10.0</b>
	<b>Total Increase FY22 Proposed Budget Request</b>	<b>\$ 2,422,223</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>14.0</b>
	<b>Non-Departmental - Salary and Reclassification Markers</b>	1,890,236	1.8%	
	<b>Total FY22 Proposed Budget Request *</b>	<b>\$ 110,994,334</b>		

\* Total excludes OPEB

### **KNOWN OPERATING COMMITMENTS**

The preliminary known changes in the Park Fund for salaries, benefits, retirement, Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), and debt service on general obligation bonds were reviewed by CAS at the September 10 meeting (<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/MC-Preliminary-FY22-Budget-Outlook.pdf>), and our revised updates to these totals are included in the summary above.

Information regarding the known operating commitments for OBI, mandated, contractual, and inflationary increases for Park operations is provided below.

The chart below outlines the increases for known operating commitments (excluding compensation and debt service for CIP) with detailed information about each line item provided in the following narrative.

<b>FY22 Park Fund Base Budget</b>				<b>% Increase from FY21 Adopted Operating Budget</b>
<b>Known Operating Commitments</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Positions/Workyears</b>	<b>Funding</b>	
Operating Budget Impact (OBI) (Excluding WQPF)	Career/Seasonal	2.0 positions 2.2 wkys	\$239,606	0.2%
Contractual Increases	N/A	N/A	\$343,995	0.3%
Utilities/Telecommunications	N/A	N/A	(\$13,403)	0.0%
Inflationary Increases for Supplies and Materials, Services and Capital Outlay	N/A	N/A	\$256,535	0.2%
Debt Service for Internal Service Fund Capital Equipment	N/A	N/A	\$1,054,357	1.0%
Risk Management	N/A	N/A	(\$20,200)	0.0%
CAS Charges (Chargebacks, Unemployment, LTD, CIO/CWIT Base)	N/A	N/A	\$131,171	0.1%
Parks Chargebacks (CIP/Enterprise/Special Revenue Funds)	N/A	N/A	\$51,849	0.0%
CIP PAYGO	N/A	N/A	\$100,000	0.1%
Water Quality Protection Fund (reimbursed by County)	Seasonal	2.0 positions 0.2 wkys	\$79,518	0.1%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4.0 Positions 4.4 Wkys</b>	<b>\$2,223,428</b>	<b>2.1%</b>

**Operating Budget Impacts (OBI)**

Operating Budget Impacts (OBI) are the costs associated with the operating, maintaining and policing of new and expanded parks. If we do not get additional resources each year to care for new facilities, it equates to an incremental reduction in service level as existing resources must be spread across a larger work program. Much of the land is acquired and developed through the CIP, while some is obtained through partnerships and developer dedicated parks and amenities. New and expanded park facilities require additional operating, maintenance, and safety resources.

The staffing and non-personnel impacts of the projects expected to be completed in or before FY22 total \$251,228. This OBI funding amount is ostensibly approved when the capital budget is approved. This funding total also includes \$11,622 for OBI that falls under the Water Quality Protection Fund (WQPF), and if approved, will be offset by revenue. Since the WQPF portion of projects will be funded from a different taxing source, associated costs are split out separately.

The chart below details the resources associated with new or expanded park infrastructure.

Project Name	FY22 OBI Expenditures	FY22 Career Workyears	FY22 Seasonal Workyears
<b>CIP PROJECTS</b>			
General Getty Neighborhood Park	\$1,935	0.0	0.0
Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Park - Irrigation	\$35,322	0.3	0.0
Meadowside Nature Center - Remodel	\$9,000	0.0	0.0
Northwest Branch Recreational Park Ballfields Irrigation	\$81,847	0.7	0.0
Piedmont Woods Local Park	\$98,355	0.9	0.2
Seneca Landing Special Park	\$13,147	0.1	0.0
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$239,606</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>CIP - WQPF PROJECTS</b>			
Cherrywood Local Park	\$4,095	0.0	0.1
General Getty Neighborhood Park	\$485	0.0	0.0
Piedmont Woods Local Park	\$7,042	0.0	0.1
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,622</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$251,228</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>

A description of each OBI project is included in the Appendix.

**Inflationary Increases for Contractual Obligations - \$343,995**

The Department has a variety of contracts with known escalation clauses built in. These include maintenance services, tree removal services, custodial services, office services, software maintenance/licensing fees, and insurance premiums.

**Utilities/Telecommunications – (\$13,403)**

The FY22 budget for utilities/telecommunications is decreasing by \$13,403. This decrease is based on savings from communication and telephone upgrades. These savings in circuit costs are offset by increases in the CIO base costs for software licensing as our department continues to transition to Microsoft TEAMS for telephone and teleconferencing support.

**Inflationary Increases for Supplies and Materials, Services and Capital Outlay - \$256,535**

The Department of Parks is requesting to increase the supplies and materials, non-contractual services and capital outlay by \$256,535 to keep up with inflation and increased costs for vehicle parts, custodial supplies, security cameras, maintenance equipment and supplies, computer and communications supplies, uniforms, office equipment and supplies, horticultural supplies, and other miscellaneous supply items.

**Debt Service for Internal Service Fund (ISF) Capital Equipment - \$1,054,357**

The Department of Parks finances vehicles and equipment through an Internal Service Fund (ISF) The Department’s ISF funding covers vehicles and large pieces of equipment costing more than \$10,000 and a life expectancy of greater than six years, which include work trucks, construction equipment, large mowers, and computer and information technology system upgrades. The Planning Board approves these purchases by approving the debt service payment each fiscal year.

For FY22, the Department of Parks requested funding level is \$1.8M to continue replacement of older fleet as well as items associated with Program Enhancement requests. The total debt service increase for FY22 of \$1,054,357 includes \$352,000 in debt service for the proposed \$1.8M request for FY22. The balance of that increase is associated with debt service purchases from prior fiscal years. For the past few years, the department has had the capacity to pay off some of the future debt service cost at year-end thereby reducing the debt service payment for the next fiscal year. Unfortunately, in FY21, we had limited ability to pay off any of the FY22 debt service due to the revenue shortfalls from property taxes and permitting and due to unexpected costs related to the pandemic.

This FY22 ISF funding of \$1.8M will provide for the following items:

- \$90,000 for Information Technology upgrades including enhancements to several conference rooms to add TEAMS video conferencing capabilities.
- \$95,000 for equipment for the Athletic Field team for the Nutrient Management and Turf Improvement Initiative and the Pesticide-free Maintenance and NNI Meadow Management initiative included in the Program Enhancements.
- \$1,615,000 for replacement of older vehicles and equipment that have exceeded their useful life cycle.

The other way that the Department purchases equipment is through capital outlay funds which are used for equipment that costs more than \$10,000 and has a life expectancy of fewer than six years. This equipment is purchased through the Park fund. The capital outlay funding request for FY22 is increasing from \$464,268 to \$478,911.

#### **Risk Management and CAS Charges - \$110,971**

Risk management, unemployment insurance, long-term disability benefit costs, CAS chargebacks and adjustments to the base cost for the CIO and CWIT are adjusted each year based on actual expenses on behalf of the Parks Department.

#### **Parks Chargebacks - \$51,849**

Chargebacks between the Park Fund and the Enterprise Fund, Special Revenue Fund, and the Wheaton HQ Internal Service Fund are reviewed and adjusted each year based on projected expenses.

#### **Water Quality Protection Fund (WQPF) - \$79,518**

The Department of Parks received its first National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Small Separate Storm Sewer System (NPDES MS4) permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment in the spring of 2010. The purpose of this permit, which is based in the Federal Clean Water Act, is to reduce stormwater pollution coming from impervious surfaces and thereby improve water quality. The permit requires the Department to develop Best Management Practices for each of the 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. Although the Department was required to obtain this permit and fulfill its requirements, no federal or state funds were available to offset this mandate.

Accordingly, in FY12 the Department was appropriated funding from the Montgomery County Water Quality Protection Fund to offset costs associated with ongoing water quality related work across the M-NCPPC's 37,000-acre park system and implementation of the Department's NPDES MS4 permit. Ongoing water quality related work includes maintenance and management of streams, lakes, non-tidal wetlands, and stormwater management facilities as well as the implementation of the Department's NPDES industrial permit for its 12 maintenance yards. As requirements have continued to increase, the amount has increased each year to its current FY21 budgeted amount of \$3,585,896.

While many improvements have been initiated under the permit, deficiencies remain in the Post Construction Stormwater Management measure. These constraints continue to pose challenges in meeting the requirements of the NPDES MS4 permit. In addition, the Department was issued a new MS4 permit which went into effect in FY19 that requires our Department to delineate impervious surfaces, drainage areas, and best management practices such as stormwater management retrofits and stream restoration projects.

These on-going requirements are the basis for the budget items listed below.

Minimum Control Measure - Post Construction Stormwater Management Best Management Practice	Lead Division	Amount	New Positions/Wkys
<p><b>Stormwater Management Positions</b> - The maintenance and inspection demand for our work programs continues to increase with specialized stormwater management structures replacing traditional ponds and basins and with new stormwater facilities being added each year based on updated permit requirements. Current staffing is insufficient to complete the existing work related to inspections and maintenance of stormwater facilities and finding and retaining qualified seasonal staff is challenging. This maintenance and inspection work programs are conducted year-round and require specialized skills and knowledge that require career staff levels of consistency and expertise. These positions will focus on routine and specialized maintenance of stormwater management and bioretention areas in the Northern and Southern Regions. The addition of these positions is needed to better meet the recommended maintenance and inspection frequencies and to improve overall efficiencies by not having to spend more manhours overhauling facilities that fall into a state of disrepair. Proper functioning stormwater facilities improve water quality downstream which benefits all users and wildlife.</p>	Northern Parks/Southern Parks	\$67,896 (cost for one position is offset by a reduction in seasonal cost)	2.0 FT Career Positions

The increased funding request of \$79,518 for NPDES activities includes the costs for the positions listed above as well as other Known Commitments. Note that if this request is approved, it will be offset by increased revenue from the Water Quality Protection Fund. A breakdown of the proposed funding is shown in the chart below.

New FY22 WQPF Funding Request	Personnel	Supplies and Materials	Other Services and Charges	Total
Stormwater Management Position - adding 2 FT career positions	\$135,792			\$135,792
Reduction in seasonal funding to offset cost of adding new career positions	(\$67,896)			(\$67,896)
OBI – Cherrywood Local Park, General Getty Neighborhood Park, Piedmont Woods Local Park	\$9,222	\$2,400		\$11,622
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$77,118</b>	<b>\$2,400</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$79,518</b>

**Position Changes** – Changes for positions moved between divisions (alarm shop, utility analyst, survey crew) included in the FY22 proposed budget were previously approved by the Planning Board as an FY21 budget transfer.

**PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS FOR THE FY22 BUDGET**

In addition to Known Commitments, the Department of Parks is proposing an increase for Program Enhancements that will expand our current work program to help meet emerging needs. The chart below gives a snapshot of the proposed Program Enhancements followed by specific descriptions.

Summary - Program Enhancements						
Item & Description	Career Positions	Career Wkyrs	Term Contract Wkyrs	Seasonal Wkyrs	Funding	% Increase from FY21 Adopted Operating Budget
Improving Customer Service	1.0	0.8	-	-	\$64,610	0.1%
Improving Quality and Playability of Ballfields	3.0	1.5	-	1.0	\$282,358	0.3%
Legislative Mandates	2.0	2.0	1.0	-	\$398,682	0.4%
Maintaining and Improving What We Have	2.0	1.3	-	1.7	\$387,880	0.4%
Park Activation	-	-	-	-	\$65,000	0.1%
Social Equity	-	-	1.0	2.1	\$141,865	0.1%
Commission-wide IT (CWIT) Program Enhancements - Department Share	-	-	-	-	\$314,300	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>\$1,654,695</b>	<b>1.6%</b>



<b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE</u></b>	<b><u>1.0 Career Position; 0.8 Career Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$64,610</u></b>
--	---	------------------------

**Parks Information and Customer Service (PICS) – \$64,610 including 1 Part-Time Career Position**

Over the summer of 2020 (June-August), the Montgomery Parks Public Information and Customer Service (PICS) office received 4,749 calls (a 9.2% increase from last summer) and 1,058 cases per day (an 18% increase from last summer), which is an average of 62 calls and 14 new cases per day (a total of 76 cases per day). The average casework time is about 15 minutes per patron. This means that, not including customer talk time, the office is receiving about 19 hours of customer casework per day. The office is currently only staffed for 13 total hours each day (eight hours from one full-time agent and five hours from one part-time agent).

In addition to the identified needs for trending demand for the PICS office during their current hours of operation (Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm and Saturdays in April-August), there is also a need for expansion of the PICS hours to be available to customers during their peak hours of patronage on evenings and weekends, especially with the planned increase in park activation events in the coming fiscal year.

The proposed change is to provide additional customer service to patrons for the hours of Monday-Saturday, 8am-8pm. To meet increased demand and extended hours, an additional part-time position is requested.

<b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – IMPROVING QUALITY AND PLAYABILITY OF BALLFIELDS</u></b>	<b><u>3.0 Career Positions; 1.5 Career Workyears; 1.0 Seasonal Workyear</u></b>	<b><u>\$282,358</u></b>
---	---	-------------------------

**Design and Construction Project Manager II – \$32,059 including 1 Full-Time Career Position and 0.25 wkys**

**Renovation Inspector – \$32,060 including 1 Full-Time Career Position and 0.25 wkys**

The Department currently maintains 314 athletic fields on park property and 206 athletic fields at elementary and middle school sites for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Over the past few years, our Department added several positions and increased contracted services to focus on providing safer, healthier turf through site-specific athletic field maintenance and increased staff training. This team, under the direction of the Athletic Field Program Manager, focuses on improving the identified deficiencies within the athletic field inventory. By using specifically trained and highly skilled staff, combined with innovative techniques, efficient maintenance and renovation equipment, athletic field maintenance is being performed to produce sustainable fields that enhance turf growth while reducing pests and diseases under today's heavy usage patterns.

The athletic field team, while still in its infancy stage, has been able to accomplish improvements on over 73% of the Montgomery Parks and MCPS athletic fields. These impacts have included aerification, seeding, nutrient management, goal mouth renovations, center 1/3 renovations, conversions from cool season to warm season grass, soil modifications for sustainability, goal replacement, increased

infiltration, backstop replacement, irrigation installation, infield lip removal, infield material modification, emergency response to assist with project grand openings, etc.

These improvements have increased the safety and playability for fields throughout Montgomery County as our surfaces have increased in consistency and quality. The department’s efforts have improved our fields, but with the massive quantity of athletic fields maintained by Montgomery Parks, additional program funding is still needed to make significant improvements. The improvements already accomplished have decreased weather related closures and increased our community’s ability to recreate for healthy lifestyles.

With a large backlog of fields still needing field upgrades, renovations, and on-going maintenance for both park and school fields, additional positions are being requested for the athletic field team for project management and inspections. The current proposed project plan also includes renovating an additional 24 MCPS sites over the next four fiscal years and adding these fields to our maintenance complement upon completion of the renovations. This program will continue as we renovate athletic fields which have reached life cycle replacement within our currently maintained inventory. Based on the assessed field condition and use for each site, site plans will include improvements such as installation of improved turfgrass varieties, laser grading, deconsolidation, cultivation methodology and drainage improvements to improve field sustainability, plant health, and reduced weather-related closures. To support these on-going renovation and field upgrade projects, the athletic field team is requesting a full-time design and construction project manager position and a full-time renovation inspector position. These positions will be partially funded (75% each) through the CIP. In conjunction with these two positions, funding of \$15,000 for supplies and materials for inspection tools, office supplies, and training is also being requested. This enhancement increases safe, recreational environments for school activities, after school programs, organized permitted users, and community use.

**Athletic Field Nutrient Management and Turf Improvement Program – \$218,239 including 1 Full-Time Career and 1.0 Seasonal Work-Year**

The Department is also requesting funding to continue to improve the quality of athletic fields through increased aerification, seeding, and fertilization. The vision for nutrient management is to create a standard for each field to receive four applications of nutrients annually (to meet a national accepted minimal standard) for athletic field safety. Using soil sample technology, staff will use targeted applications of nutrients to improve soil health as a method to improve the athletic field levels of sustainability, accessibility, and safety resulting in a decrease in the number of field closures and improved pest management. This funding will be directed to the lowest ranking fields using the collector score with a goal to do a minimum of two applications (two applications out of the needed four applications) per year on approximately half (about 150 out of the 314) of the athletic fields throughout the County. This request also includes \$30,000 of seasonal funding and \$100,000 of supplies and materials funding.

<p><b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – LEGISLATIVE MANDATES</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>2.0 Career Positions; 2 Career Workyears; 1.0 Term Contract Position; 1.0 Term Workyear</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>\$398,682</u></b></p>
---	--	--------------------------------

**ADA Publications Manager – \$97,890 including 1 Term Contract Position**

This request is to add an ADA Publications Manager, as a term contract position, to manage web contracts and public documents for compliance with The Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Our Parks request is part of a larger effort by the Commission to address accessibility online.

This position will monitor compliance and provide training to staff to ensure that our website, presentations, and publications are ADA compliant and accessible for all patrons, including users with disabilities. This position will create systems that will sustain compliance after their term contract has expired, and after MNCPPC’s one-time website improvements are made. Written documents must also comply with standards, especially if the documents eventually are hosted on our websites. In some cases, larger written documents need to be certified as compliant due to their complexity. This position will ensure that our media on our website and our written public documents are usable by all with clear labels, readable text and is compatible with assistive technologies.

To ensure that we continue to provide the highest accessibility rankings (AAA) for our public, additional manpower is needed for an overall initial review and to then monitor the website content and presentation on a regular basis.

There are over 1,200 active website pages contained within our Montgomery Parks site. Each page needs a comprehensive review and should be evaluated with the online accessibility software with accessibility modifications applied as needed. To confirm a page-by-page accessibility score, the initial project review would involve at least 30 minutes to 1 hour per page, estimating over 800 labor hours to complete.

Once a comprehensive review and clean-up is complete, monitoring changes and additions as they happen will guarantee that the site remains accessible. The Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division (PACP) receives a monthly average of 75-100 website page update requests with an average of 98 new images uploaded. To meet ADA compliance, each webpage update requires review and approval (10-15 minutes per request = 14 labor hours per month) and each image requires review of alt text descriptions (5-15 minutes per image= 17 labor hours per month). An average of 38 PDF documents are added to the site monthly. Remediation of PDF documents vary, depending on the complexity of the content and number of images contained (ranging from 15 minutes to over an hour per document = 29 labor hours per month). Here is data from a sampling of recent months:

Month/Year	PDFs	Images	Total
19-Sep	27	75	102
19-Oct	24	95	119
19-Nov	64	55	119
20-Sept (thru 15th)	10	100	110
20-Aug	42	150	192
20-Jul	40	62	102
Average (rounded)	38	98	135

As the comprehensive review is completed, this position will shift focus to development of procedures and training. Document remediation is currently outsourced for certification purposes. Training will help staff provide better quality documentation thereby reducing these remediation costs.

### **Electrical Upgrades at Carbon Producing Facilities – \$150,000**

In December 2017, Montgomery County adopted Resolution 18-974 to aggressively accelerate the County's efforts to decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by committing to reach 100% elimination by 2035. With the goal of achieving net-zero by 2035, which would generate significant savings in utility costs over the long term, this requested funding will provide for the necessary infrastructure modifications to replace on-site fossil fuel combustion with electric alternatives, and to provide for electrical upgrades to accommodate increased implementation of electric vehicles and equipment Department-wide. This requested funding will be used for phased facility heating system retrofits, replacing on-site fossil fuel combustion (eliminating GHG emissions from approximately 100 natural gas, propane, and oil accounts) with electrified alternatives. Additionally, electrical upgrades will be completed to enable our department to accommodate the infrastructure necessary for increased adoption of electric vehicles and equipment at staffed sites, further reducing reliance on fossil fuel combustion and associated emissions of our operations. This funding will be utilized to provide upgrades for at least 10 staffed sites, prioritizing two sites per year, dependent on facility size and condition. "Greening" of electricity sources through renewable energy (e.g. solar) will be another tool and next step to eliminate GHG emissions and reduce utility costs from existing facilities and operations.

### **Pesticide-free Maintenance and NNI Meadow Management – \$150,792**

This request is to add two full-time Park Maintenance Workers to work as dedicated staffing operating our Foamstream machine from mid-March through mid-November so that our current routine work programs are not adversely impacted by pulling maintenance staff to run the machine for short term projects in each management area throughout the year. Foamstream is a spray that uses a combination of heat and biodegradable foam to damage and eventually kill unwanted plants. Foamstream can also be used for other outdoor power washing, cleaning, and sanitizing tasks. Over the past year, the Northern Parks Division's Foamstream machine has been in use for the equivalent of 43 days of use to handle a wide variety of tasks including moss and algae removal, destroying weeds in landscape beds, along fence lines, in sidewalk cracks, on playgrounds, and for cleaning flagstone walkways, pavers, asphalt, stone walls and curbs. Usage of the machine would have been higher over the past few months, but scheduled staff rotations during the COVID crisis led to deferrals of many maintenance tasks due to limited availability of staff.

Adding dedicated staffing to use these machines will lead to familiarity with the equipment and knowledge of field conditions and weed identification which creates work program efficiencies and less down time for the equipment. This maintenance work will enable us to achieve the maximum benefit of this new technology and to further achieve the mandate to reduce pesticide use for maintaining park infrastructure, landscaping, playgrounds, and athletic fields and their associated amenities.

Since the Foamstream machine is less effective to use during freezing weather, during the late fall to early spring period, these new positions will be assigned to work on non-native invasive (NNI) plant

control and meadow mowing. This will help us to better manage and maintain our 983 acres of meadows with the goal of increasing our total acreage to 2,336 over time, thereby enhancing the habitat and saving beneficial trees and plants. This request also includes \$15,000 for Supplies and Materials.

<p><b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING WHAT WE HAVE</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>2.0 Career Positions; 1.3 Career Workyears; 1.7 Seasonal Workyears</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>\$387,880</u></b></p>
---	---	--------------------------------

**Project Manager – \$29,280 including 1 Full-Time Position and 0.3 Workyears**

This request is to add a Project Manager I (Engineer) in the Park Development Division (PDD) to work in conjunction with the proposed Facilities Management (FM) position for facility condition assessments to focus on rehabilitation of aging park infrastructure, including responding quickly to requests from operations for investigation of and solutions to problems such as flooding concerns, sink holes, failing pipes, and erosion that threatens trails or other infrastructure. Proactively responding to smaller rehabilitation projects will help defray costly infrastructure failures.

Many Montgomery Parks facilities were developed over 30 years ago and are sited in low lying areas. High intensity rainfall causes sinkholes, pipe failures, residential property flooding, and stream erosion. Over the last two years, Montgomery Parks’ engineers responded to over 25 reports of weather-related infrastructure failure, requiring over 800 hours of staff time to resolve. In September 2020 alone there were over 10 failures requiring immediate action. The impacted trails or fields were closed until repairs are made. The pace of these problems will increase as our infrastructure ages and the irregular weather patterns continue.

In addition, we have four significant/high hazard dams. Management of these dams requires Emergency Action Plans with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) that need to be updated annually, as well as monitoring after storms and whenever questions or issues arise. Managing compliance and safety of these dams requires a significant amount of staff work each year. Currently one PDD engineer manages these requirements for three of the dams and another PDD engineer manages the other dam in addition to other assigned other work. These major MDE Dams require Emergency Action Plan (EAP) updates each year which is very labor intensive. In addition, the engineers teach the Dam Managers about the maintenance and safety protocols and keep up with all the inspections and repairs. The other stormwater management and farm pond dams that Parks’ owns and maintain require considerable work, but we presently do not have an engineer available with the capacity to properly handle these tasks.

This new position will also create in-house design plans, conduct field engineering, and obtain regulatory permits for small projects which will help improve timeliness for executing repairs and renovations and reduce consulting costs for work currently being outsourced. This position would also help with updating Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) assets from CIP and Park Permit projects, conducting water quality facility inspections, and rehabilitating the park system’s 72.11 miles of underground stormwater piping. Additionally, this position will assist in annual inspections of the department’s 119 ballfield bleachers to ensure compliance with current codes. This position will be funded partially by CIP (70%).

### **Facility Condition Assessments – \$148,600 including 1 Full-Time Position and 1.7 Seasonal Workyears**

In many cases, our Department's aging infrastructure requires the replacement and upgrade of major systems to ensure code compliance and a safe environment for all patrons. This request is to add one full-time position and seasonal staff to conduct and document facility condition assessments. The primary tasks will be to evaluate and grade the condition of specific assets which pose the greatest liability to the Commission, including the department's 481 bridges, 532 courts, 28 public activity buildings, and 119 bleachers. The work program will include coordination with risk management and key departmental staff to research industry standards for assets and to develop inspection criteria for over 1,700 departmental assets to ensure data is captured in the EAM system and disseminated to appropriate divisional authority. The team will assess current condition and forecast maintenance requirements over the life of the asset providing details needed to prioritize work thereby reducing downtime of specific assets and the frequency of costly emergency repairs.

### **Infrastructure Funding - Tennis/Basketball Court Repairs – \$150,000**

This funding will be used to improve court maintenance by extending the overall life of tennis and basketball courts by repairing cracks, replacing color coating, and performing other necessary repairs for our inventory of over 300 tennis courts and 229 basketball courts. The department has a large backlog of needed court renovations that exceeds existing CIP funding and staff capacity to complete. These maintenance repairs will help to extend the surface life of the courts by helping to defer the need for major renovations and to decrease safety issues. Repairing cracks will reduce the opportunity for weed growth which can cause significant damage and will reduce the need for pesticide applications. Increased funding is needed to adequately maintain the athletic surfacing systems resulting in increased efficiency, safety, attractiveness, and long-term sustainability. Our project management staff will utilize this funding to hire contractors to assist in completing this backlog of court repairs needed for our aging parks. In FY19 and FY20 major maintenance funding was used to complete repairs to six tennis courts and six basketball courts (total cost of \$35k for these repairs). Currently, there is a backlog of 22 tennis courts and 33 basketball courts in immediate need of renovations to extend court life. This funding will be used to continue to reduce the backlog of needed repairs.

### **Trail Amenities Enhancement – \$60,000**

This funding request is to upgrade our existing trail system by adding a dedicated budget to add trail amenities for existing trails including benches, bike racks, fix-it stations, trail network maps, kiosk content, interpretive signs, etiquette signs and other materials. This enhancement will improve the trail user experience by adding benches to provide rest areas for all users, including seniors and adding bike racks to provide a secure location for users to lock their bikes. Funding will also be used to add maps to improve navigation and trail information and signs to make our trails more welcoming to users, improve the overall trail experience, and to increase awareness of our trail network. We have over 250 miles of trails in our network, and most trails will benefit from the addition of these amenities. The funds will be prioritized based on new trail and renovation projects, the trails most lacking in amenities, and equity areas.

<b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – PARK ACTIVATION</u></b>		<b><u>\$65,000</u></b>
---	--	------------------------

**Park Activation – \$65,000**

The Park Activation Program launched in fall 2016 and is designed to bring people into parks and reconnect with their communities. Our Department continues to expand the number of “Pop Up” program and event offerings in parks with an increasing number of participants. In 2019, Activation held 77 events and served 5,352 people. Attendance goals were met at 50 of the 77 events, and attendance exceeded expectations at 35 events. Additional resources would allow for the Activation team to determine where there is need and demand for programming through effective research and outreach. Programs and events that are successful can continue to grow, and additional resources will be directed to areas where community-focused outreach will attract more participants to the parks and Activation’s programs. This request is to add non-personnel funding needed to continue to improve communication to the communities and to expand events. The total includes funding for event supplies and promotional items including permanent and temporary signage to give park users information on both current and planned events. In addition, funds will be used to purchase kiosks, tablets and other technical equipment that will be used to manage events and to survey visitors and capture metrics on park users that will help expand outreach. As part of a broader outreach strategy, these items will be used to increase attendance at events, estimated at 20% in the first year.

<b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – SOCIAL EQUITY</u></b>	<b><u>1.0 Term Contract Position; 1.0 Term Contract Workyear; 2.1 Seasonal Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$141,865</u></b>
---	--	-------------------------

**Program Access – \$111,865 including 1 Term Contract Position and 1.1 Seasonal Workyears**

The Program Access Office is enhancing inclusive and specialized programs and events for underserved populations throughout the county. To that end, we are proposing to add a term contract position, a Program Access Program Assistant, (Therapeutic Recreation Specialist II), to accomplish this goal. This position would sit in the Inclusive Programs and Community Outreach section of the Program Access Office.

Underserved populations can include the 55+ senior adult population, veterans and people with disabilities:

- The 55+ population is the fastest growing population in Montgomery County. By the year 2030, twenty three percent, 23%, of the county’s population will fall into this demographic, thus the need for enhanced services, programs, leisure opportunities, volunteer and employment opportunities throughout the county. This age group enjoys many programs our Park system offers including gardening, nature center activities and hobbies, exercise programs, volunteering and participating in events and special interest activities. In addition, the baby boomer population is “living in place”, staying in their homes or communities where they have lived and

perhaps raised their families. They are active, have disposable income and want to stay close to their loved ones. Grandparents have either taken on the roles of care givers to their grandchildren providing greater opportunities to engage in our parks, amenities, events and programs.

- **Veterans.** There are over 43,000 veterans currently living in Montgomery County, and that number is projected to increase by at least 5% each year. This demographic will demand additional services and leisure opportunities. Wounded veterans with varying abilities, their families and friends are visiting and utilizing our accessible parks, boat ramps, water facilities, archery facilities, ice rinks, tennis facilities, sports facilities, and other amenities while participating in programs and special events throughout our Park system.

While Montgomery County departments such as the Health and Human Services and Recreation Departments provide services and programs for vulnerable populations, due to the tremendous growth of these underserved populations, county resources can and will become limited as the need for leisure programs and services increase. This Parks position can be vital in closing the gap between the need and the delivery of programs and services. Montgomery Parks can enhance program offerings including active aging events, adaptive sporting, games and exercise programs, walking programs, intergenerational programs, special interest programs and more.

This request also adds funding for seasonal staff to provide support to individuals with disabilities attending programs and camps, assist with marketing and outreach, and to assist in the organization, coordination and installation of accessible equipment. This increased funding will improve service to users by expanding park accessibility; improve marketing and community outreach to engage more county residents in park plans, programs, and issues; provide greater consideration of social equity in delivery of facilities and programs; and provide exceptional customer service at all levels to internal and external stakeholders

**Departmental Internship Program – \$30,000 including 1.0 Seasonal Workyear**

Having an intern program promotes awareness of the County's Park system and aids in recruitment of talented individuals to fill vacancies within the Department. This internship program will focus on building diverse talent pipelines for maintenance trades and marketing positions. While the Department generally has a diverse workforce, there are certain positions that have traditionally lacked diversity so this concerted effort will aim to attract diverse candidates through targeted partnerships with schools, non-profit institutions, and other affinity groups. Interns will complete special projects in conjunction with career staff. Funds would cover the cost of six (6) internships available year-round at 12 weeks each.

<b><u>PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT – COMMISSION-WIDE IT</u></b>		<b><u>\$314,300</u></b>
--	--	-------------------------

The Office of the Chief Information Officer has proposed a new request for FY22 for the Commission-wide IT Initiative Internal Service Fund. The department’s share of the proposed new and/or expanded IT project totals \$314,300. This total to fund the next steps when the current version of ERP reaches the end of life in 2023. A requirements study is underway to determine whether we should upgrade to the



next version of Infor ERP or move to a different solution. Further detail for this budget request will be presented to the Planning Board on October 15th.

**Summary**

The Department of Parks is continuing to refine the FY22 Proposed Budget. Being mindful of the cost pressures facing the Park Fund from salaries, benefits, retirement, and mandated obligations, the FY22 budget request shows our commitment to continue to provide the best services possible to our customers with a 2.3% operating increase (excluding compensation markers) over the FY21 budget.

Staff is requesting approval from the Planning Board to proceed to prepare the FY22 Park Fund operating budget at the Base Budget plus Program Enhancements level.

Staff will be available at the work session to provide any additional information on the budget request.

The Department of Parks is tentatively scheduled to return to the Planning Board on October 29th should a follow-up work session be required. The Department is scheduled for a final work session on the operating budget on November 12th to seek approval of specific funding levels for the FY22 Proposed Budgets for the Park Fund, Enterprise Fund, Property Management Fund, Special Revenue Fund, and Internal Services Equipment Fund.

APPENDIX

**FY22 Operating Budget Impact (OBI) Project Descriptions**

<b>CIP PROJECTS</b>			
<b>PROJECT NAME</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>CAREER WYS</b>	<b>SEASONAL WYS</b>
<b>General Getty Neighborhood Park</b>	<b>\$1,935.00</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
This project renovates and adds to the existing parking lot, adds picnic tables and portable restroom pads for accessibility. Improvements were also made to the walking paths. As with all ground disturbance projects, a new stormwater management system was added including, culverts, inlets, and an outfall.			
<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Park - Irrigation</b>	<b>\$35,322.00</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>
This project adds irrigation to soccer field #3.			
<b>Meadowside Nature Center - Remodel</b>	<b>\$9,000.00</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
This is a two-part project: Part one is a design-build contract to renovate the exhibit room and create a new exhibit design. Part two is an interior renovation of the building to be performed by Facilities Management. The interior renovation includes replacing restroom fixtures, adding an ADA family restroom, and refinishing the lobby and activity rooms.			
<b>Northwest Branch Recreational Park Ballfields Irrigation</b>	<b>\$81,847.00</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>
This project adds irrigation for fields 1,2,3, and 4.			
<b>Piedmont Woods Local Park</b>	<b>\$98,355.00</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.2</b>
The 65-acre Piedmont Woods Local Park was required as part of site plan approval to be conveyed to M-NCPPC, for a “recreational park facility.” It includes a one-acre dog park with shade structure and drinking fountain, two tennis courts (striped for pickleball), one basketball court, a multi-age playground, hard surface and natural surface nature trails, two picnic shelters, a 48-car parking lot, stormwater management and landscape planting.			
<b>Seneca Landing Special Park</b>	<b>\$13,147.00</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Seneca Landing Special Park is located near the historic C&O Canal on Seneca Creek and Riley’s Lock Road and includes a boat ramp for motorized boats. This project added a fully accessible floating boat launch for kayakers and canoeists (the only one of its kind in this area), an accessible picnic area with tables and grills. Renovations were also made to the access road and parking lot to ensure accessibility from arrival in the park to pushing off the dock.

<b>TOTAL OBI FOR CIP PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$239,606</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>CIP PROJECTS - WQPF</b>			
<b>Cherrywood LP</b>	<b>\$4,095.00</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>
This newly acquired parcel of land increasing the existing park includes a shallow wetland Stormwater facility of approximately 150,000 sq. ft.			
<b>General Getty Neighborhood Park</b>	<b>\$485.00</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
See description above.			
<b>Piedmont Woods Local Park</b>	<b>\$7,042.00</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>
See description above.			
<b>TOTAL OBI FOR CIP PROJECTS - WQPF</b>	<b>\$11,622</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$251,228</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>