



MONTGOMERY PARKS

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
2425 Reedie Drive | Wheaton, MD 20902
MontgomeryParks.org

MCPB Date: 5/13/21
Agenda Item # 3

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 6, 2021

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 *JN*
Shuchi Vera, Chief, Management Services Division *SV*

FROM: Nancy Steen, Budget Manager *NS*

SUBJECT: FY21 Budget Adjustment for the Department of Parks

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the request for an FY21 Budget Adjustment for the Department of Parks.

BACKGROUND:

All budget adjustments over \$100,000 require Planning Board approval.

The budget resolution approving the Department of Parks operating budget is appropriated at the divisional level. The Planning Board has authority to transfer appropriations between the major object codes (personnel, supplies, services, capital outlay) as long as each divisional appropriation is not exceeded by ten percent.

The recommended transfers do not exceed ten percent in any division.

The department requests approval to adjust the FY21 divisional line item budgets, as shown below, to accommodate specific needs of the Department.

REQUEST APPROVAL:

At today's Planning Board session, the Finance Department presented the Nine Month Financial Report which

indicates that the Department of Parks will have estimated Park Fund expenditure savings of \$6.5M. The Department is requesting to spend a portion of the projected expenditure savings in excess of our required savings plan of \$5.6M to meet critical needs and to better position the department for the upcoming FY22 budget while still contributing a portion of the savings to bolster the reserve balance for the Park fund. The Department is projecting to realize savings above and beyond the mandated savings plan as a result of being conservative and vigilant considering the economic and financial uncertainty of the past year.

DETAILS OF BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:

The Department of Parks is seeking the Board's approval to transfer \$760,000 from Personnel Services to Other Services and Charges, Supplies & Materials, and Capital Outlay to fund the following needs:

Equity Focus Area Amenities - \$215,000

- Transfer of \$215,000 to continue to increase amenities in parks by creating social spaces where residents can gather. Parks being prioritized for these amenities are in equity focus areas and include Acorn Urban Park, Flower Avenue Urban Park, Long Branch Local Park, Long Branch-Wayne Local Park and Upper Long Branch Neighborhood Park. Examples of some of the types of amenities being considered are included in Appendix A. Projected use of this funding includes:
 - \$100,000 to purchase picnic tables, game tables (e.g. dominos, checkers, chess), benches, and other amenities.
 - \$80,000 to create targeted amenities that will draw people to these spaces. In Acorn Urban Park and Flower Avenue Urban Park, funding will be used to purchase and install ping pong tables (concrete tables that can be bolted to the ground), concrete corn hole sets and other games as well as swing benches and other amenities to further activate these spaces.
 - \$20,000 will be used to replace basketball hoops as needed at Long Branch-Wayne Local Park, Upper Long Branch Neighborhood Park and other areas.
 - \$15,000 to purchase and install standard inverted-U bike racks and other trail amenities for installation during park renovation projects throughout the year. Currently, Montgomery Parks has just 80 bike racks at 53 parks in our system of 424 parks. This funding amount will assist our department in expanding the availability of bike racks and trail amenities through our park system.

Bike Fleet - \$15,000

- Transfer of \$15,000 to further encourage accessibility to biking on our trails for all residents. Access to, and the availability of, mountain bikes is a barrier to biking on our 200 miles of natural surface trails for some residents of Montgomery County, including young people. This funding will be used to purchase mountain bikes and bike amenities, including 24" mountain bikes for youth and full-sized bicycles for high school students and adults. This fleet of mountain bikes will then be made available for trail volunteers, students, individuals learning to ride, and event participants, especially people from under-served communities. This fleet will introduce residents to the joys of mountain biking on our department's many trails and improve efforts to make trails accessible and inclusive for our entire community.

Mini Excavator - \$35,000

- Transfer of \$35,000 to purchase a mini excavator to be used primarily for construction and renovation of trails.

Electric Equipment - \$145,000

- Transfer of \$145,000 to replace existing gas-powered mowing and landscaping equipment that has reached the end of useful life. These purchases will continue our transition and evaluation of electric equipment for departmental needs. Use of electric equipment reduces maintenance cost, noise pollution, air pollution and fuel costs. This funding will be used to purchase various equipment including several mowers, multipurpose trimmers, landscape edgers, leaf blowers, a cart, and a trailer to store and transport the equipment.

Turf improvement supplies - \$90,000

- Transfer of \$90,000 to purchase turf supplies (including seed, *Turface* for field maintenance, corn gluten, fertilizer) to increase the quality of athletic fields through increased aerification, seeding, and fertilization. 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. Fields selected for increased applications will be prioritized based on field condition rankings in conjunction with proximity to equity focus areas. Our FY22 proposed budget includes a program enhancement request that includes funding additional staff and supplies for athletic field nutrient management and turf improvement. Since this program enhancement is unlikely to be funded in the final FY22 approved budget, we want to utilize FY21 projected savings to continue to move this program forward.

Upgrade – Fleet Management Software - \$260,000

- Transfer of \$260,000 to upgrade the existing fleet management system with an industry leading system that will offer increased product features, operational efficiencies and reliability. Our fleet software is a comprehensive system for fleet planning and analysis that includes lifecycle asset management of our vehicles and equipment, work order tracking of services performed and planned maintenance, parts usage and inventory, and fuel consumption data.

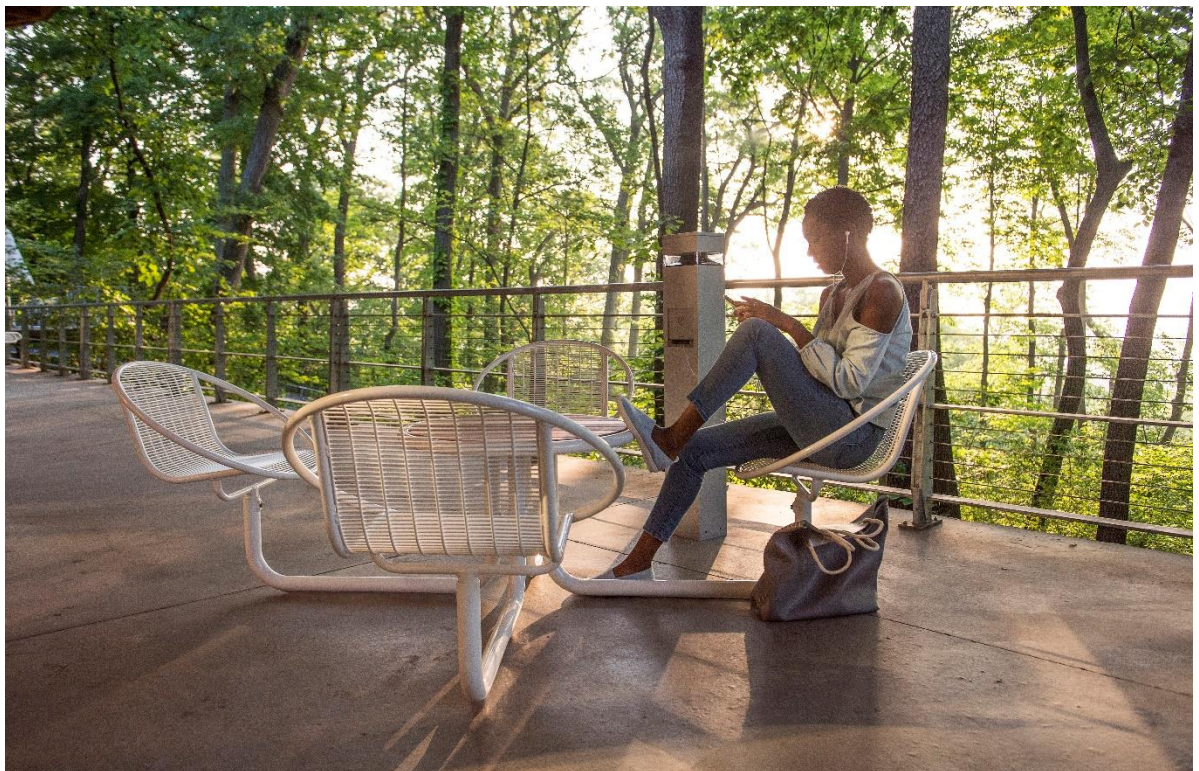
The existing fleet software is a Microsoft Windows based version that is reaching end of life for support. The major benefits of this new version include better user experience, an automated reservation system, location tracking and more – all of which will improve oversight and efficiency of our fleet. The new system will allow management to create more efficient routes, thereby reducing staff time spent on the road to complete park maintenance tasks, reducing fuel costs and consumption and allowing the department to further reduce greenhouse gases to meet the county's climate change goals. The system upgrade also provides maintenance benchmarks that can be used to assess fleet maintenance activities. The new reservation functionality will allow for better equipment sharing across the department to make sure that we have the right equipment at the right place at the right time. With the increased functionality, we will have better data to inform fleet purchasing decisions and to understand the impact of electrifying our fleet.

The Planning Board's approval of this transfer is requested.

Approved by the Planning Board: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX A – EXAMPLES OF AMENITIES BEING CONSIDERED FOR EQUITY FOCUS AREA
FINAL SELECTIONS ARE STILL UNDER REVIEW





Picture of tables being considered for park amenities.

