MCPB Item #3
July 15, 2021

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 8, 2021

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks
Miti Figueredo, Deputy Director, Administration
Jai Cole, Division Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division (PPSD)
Andrew Frank, Division Chief, Park Development Division (PDD)

FROM: Carl Morgan, AICP, CIP Manager, Park Development Division

SUBJECT: Strategy Session #2, FY 23-28 Capital Improvements Program

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the overall direction and implementation strategies for the Parks FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Staff will use this guidance to formulate CIP budgetary scenarios for the Planning Board to consider in work sessions in September.

APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES

This is the second of two strategy sessions that the Department will have with the Board for the FY23-28 CIP. The first session on April 15 looked very broadly at the CIP and focused on overall strategy with project evaluation criteria as well as outlined the path to submission of the CIP in November 2021. Since the Board last met, the County Council approved a final version of the FY22 Capital Budget and amended the FY21-26 CIP. For more information about the current CIP and these changes, please refer to **page ©1**. The overall strategy and evaluation criteria for the FY23-28 CIP are also included for your reference on **page ©12-13.**

This session, while still looking broadly at the CIP, will

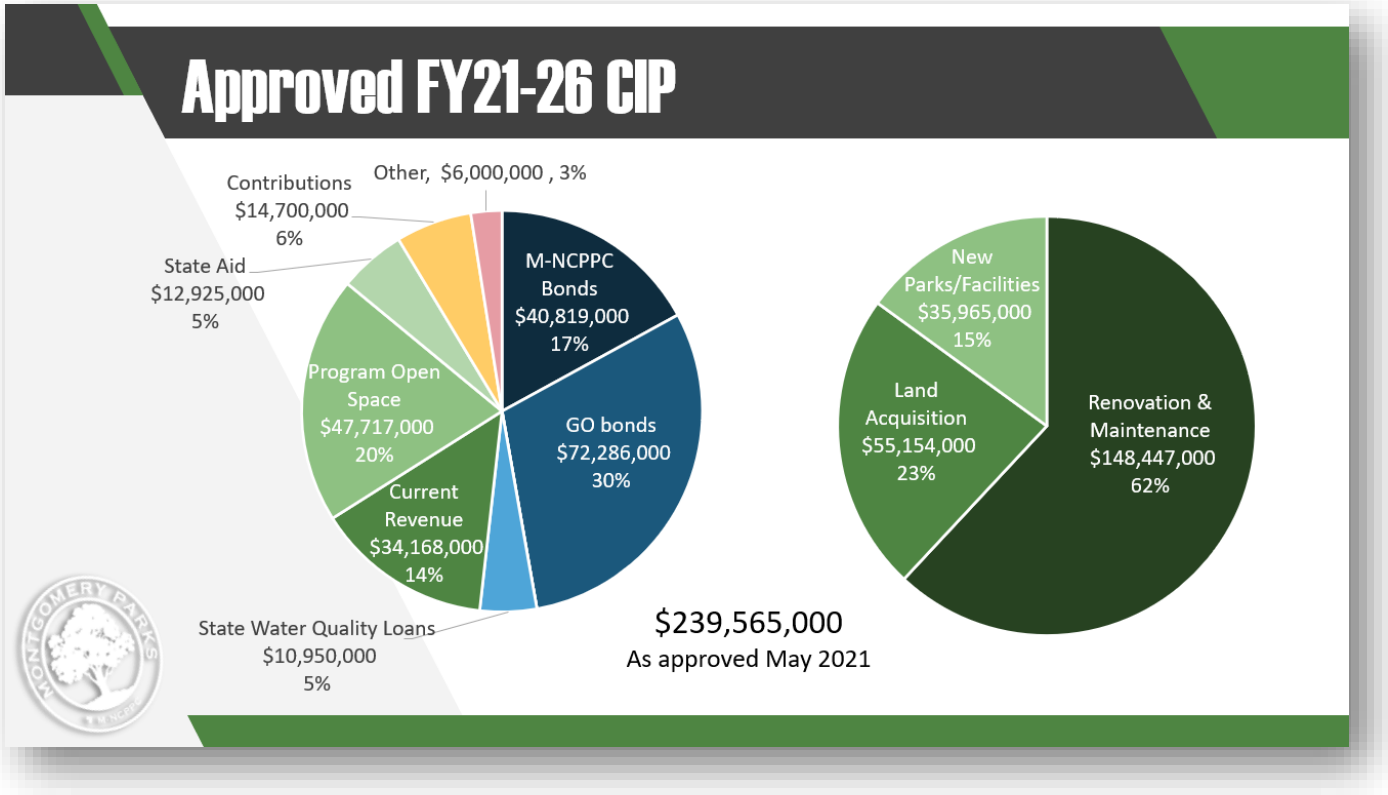
- Take a closer look at some of the key components of the CIP, including funding sources and project types with their accompanying challenges and opportunities,
- Review affordability and fiscal outlook
- Discuss public feedback
- Identify general emerging issues, subjects, and themes that will be shaping the FY23-28 CIP

After this session, staff will begin to look at funding scenarios that reflect the guidance of the strategy sessions and return to the Board in early September with specific funding recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Key Components of the CIP

Information about specific funding sources are found on **pages©14-19** as well as the summary chart below**.**



Matching the right funding with the right projects

As we get closer to making recommendations for funding in future work sessions, it is important to note that not all funding is fluid between projects in the CIP. So, when looking at making choices between some high priority projects over others, not all projects are in one large, theoretical "basket," but are rather, in various "baskets."

Projects sometimes get divided in groups or multiple "baskets" based on several factors that include:

- Park Classification – Countywide parks are funded with County GO bonds while parks classified as Local Parks are primarily funded with M-NCPPC bonds. These funding sources are typically not interchangeable between parks of different classifications.
- Dedicated Funding Sources such as:
    - Contributions – sometimes received for a specific purpose designated by a donor, such as the Brookside Gardens Plant Propagation structure, or for a purpose created by a public action, such as the Bethesda Park Impact Payment or the Mid-County Park Benefit Payment, that support implementation of acquisition, development or other goals in specific area master plans.
    - Enterprise funding (cash, bonds, etc.) being used solely for Enterprise Division facilities such as ice arenas, trains, boating facilities, event centers, and associated infrastructure that are paid for by user fees.

- Water Quality Protection Charge backed funding (cash, bonds, and loans) for pollution prevention and stream restoration work
- Grants and Bond Bills from the State – grants that the State legislature approves for specific projects

While we have included some additional information about nuances of funding sources in the attachments section (*Limited Fluidity of funding: Park Classification and Purpose-driven Funding Sources* **page ©14**), as we develop the FY23-28 CIP, there are a few funding sources that warrant a deeper discussion here, including Program Open Space, Water Quality Protection Charge-backed Long-Term Financing, and Federal Grants.

Program Open Space

A significant source of funding for development and acquisition of parks (~20%) comes from the State in the form of Program Open Space. This funding source comes from the 0.5% transfer tax on every real estate transaction in the state. M-NCPPC is the local governing body for Montgomery County and receives an annual allocation that may be used for open space acquisition and park development in the Parks CIP or as a pass-through to municipalities. State law requires that the first half of POS funding be set aside for acquisition. This leaves the remaining half to fund the Montgomery Parks development program and some pass-through funding to municipalities.

The fundamental challenge for POS is that the State budget system only sets the funding level for the next fiscal year, which requires us to rely on forecasting and analyzing past performance to program the outer years of the CIP. Looking at past performance and considering the State's more recent projections, a moderately conservative assumption would be to program around $7 to 9 million of POS funding per year in the CIP. For example, the current CIP is programmed at about $8.0 million per year within that range; however, the State recently approved the FY22 allocation at $9.6 million. Also, projections through FY26 in the State's Capital Improvements Plan trend upward, though they are rough estimates and will be determined each year.

In the FY23-28 scenarios that the Board will consider in September work sessions, staff expects to recommend POS programming between $8-9 million per year, based on the state forecasts. One significant variable will be the rate at which the state will pay back past POS funding that was diverted to other parts of the state budget in prior years. In FY22, for affordability reasons, the Governor initially opted not to include paybacks from prior years in his budget, but the state ultimately fully funded the pay back for this year.

For more detailed information regarding POS, please refer to **page ©17-19**

Water Quality Protection Charge-backed Long-Term Financing

In the Spring of 2016 during the County Council's review of the FY17-22 CIP the Council concluded that all water quality related capital projects in the county-wide CIP could be funded with Water Quality Protection Charge (WQPC) funds, including Parks projects (Pollution Prevention PDF and the Stream Protection PDFs). Prior to this, the Parks water quality projects were funded with GO bonds. Two years later, in 2018 the Council incorporated this change in the FY19-24 CIP, replacing all water quality bonds with low interest loans from the State of Maryland's Water Quality Financing Administration, and Parks was directed to submit a loan application to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The

debt service on these loans would be backed by the WQPC revenues and both M-NCPPC and the County were instructed to make separate loan applications to the State.

Department staff submitted a $4.8 million application in January 2019, and the application was initially approved by MDE, but later that fall, MDE placed their review and the application process on hold over concerns that the M-NCPPC application was to be backed by WQPC revenues that were under the auspices of Montgomery County Government (MCG), not M-NCPPC.

Since that time, the Commission and MCG have been in extensive discussions to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would resolve the situation and allow the projects and loan administration process to continue with the State. In September, staff will update the Planning Board on the progress of the MOU and the loan application and will present recommendations for funding Parks water quality projects with an appropriate funding source that will move the projects forward without further delay.

Federal Grants

Pandemic relief legislation and other changes in Congress this year have created a number of opportunities for federal funding to support local governments. M-NCPPC has worked to leverage external state and federal funding options to pursue additional funds outside of the normal channels, including working with Congressional representatives from various districts to support projects in their respective districts. While not guaranteed to be awarded, the Commission has pursued several different funding avenues related to the Community Project and Infrastructure grant funding made available recently. The projects that Parks has submitted for funding are summarized below, and include Federal Community Project Funding grants, infrastructure earmarks, and Land and Water Conservation Fund grants offered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources via the National Park Service. These grants all have matching requirement assumptions ranging from 20-100 %. If awarded, the Commission will request budget amendments to fund the anticipated matching requirement for these federal funding initiatives. Additionally, depending upon the success level of receiving these grants, staff may also return to the Commission to discuss staffing solutions that would address any potential implementation issues above and beyond the solutions presented to the Planning Board today in Item #4.

Congressional District/Community Project Funding Applications:

- Wheaton Regional Park: pavement and drainage rehabilitation, $500,000
- Long Branch Stream Valley Park: Pedestrian bridge replacements, $500,000
- Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park: tributary restoration at University and Channing, $600,000
- Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park: Tributary restoration at Burnett and Sligo mainstem, $500,000
- Rock Creek Stream Valley Park: trail rehabilitation and bridge replacement, $400,000
- Edgewood Neighborhood Park: Community gardens, parking lot and walkway rehabilitation, $300,000
- McKnew Local Park: playground replacement and parking lot/walkway rehabilitation, $400,000
- Meadowood Local Park: access road, parking lot, outfall and court renovation, $400,000
- Damascus Recreational Park: parking lot and restroom rehabilitation and new lighting, $600,000
- South Germantown Recreational Park: trail and roadway rehabilitation, $500,000

Congressional District/Infrastructure Earmark Applications:

- Fleet Electrification: Purchase of electric vehicles and related infrastructure to Park maintenance yards, $3,700,000 (applied in Congressional Districts 3, 6 and 8).
- Capital Crescent Trail/Little Falls Parkway: trail and roadway renovations, $12,000,000
- Northwest Branch Trail: trail and roadway renovations, $8,000,000 (applied in Congressional Districts 3 and 8).
- Powerline Trail: paved trail extension between Muddy Branch and Cabin John Regional Park, $12,000,000 (applied in Congressional Districts 6 and 8).

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant via the Maryland Department of Natural Resources:

- Long Branch Parks Initiatives: renovations to Long Branch Local Park, Long Branch Stream Valley Unit 1 and 2, Long Branch-Arliss Neighborhood Park, and Long Branch-Wayne Local Park, $12,000,000

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)Grant (in partnership with Prince George's County Parks)

- Sligo Creek trail, trail crossings, and bridge rehabilitation, $4,875,000
- Rock Creek trail, trail crossings, and bridge rehabilitation, $3,000,000
- Northwest Branch Trail and access road rehabilitation and bridge replacements, $2,250,000
- Hard Surface Trail Signs, Wayfinding & Emergency Response Information, $300,000

Affordability in the CIP

The current CIP for FY21-26 is $239.6M and is comprised of several funding sources. Fifty-two percent of the CIP is debt-supported (bonds and loans) while the remaining 48% comes from cash-backed revenues (current revenue, state funds, contributions, and revolving funds).

To make sure that tax revenues that support the CIP are spent wisely, the County Council sets limits, or spending caps, on certain types of funding sources, particularly debt funding. These spending caps, known formally as "Spending Affordability Guidelines" (SAG), are a key part of capital improvements programming in Montgomery County. As such, establishing SAG is the very first act that the Council takes in the CIP process, well before any department or agency has had the opportunity to submit a CIP for Council review. SAG is set in early October of odd numbered years and revisited annually in even numbered years. The Council also reviews SAG annually at the end of January before they begin reviews of the capital budget and CIP.

There are several funding sources in the County-wide CIP that are subject to SAG, but the two primary ones that affect the Parks CIP are for Montgomery County general obligation bonds ("GO bonds"), and M-NCPPC general obligation bonds ("M-NCPPC bonds") bonds.

More information about SAG can be found on **page ©20**, but some key points that the Board should consider as it is making decision on a new CIP include:

- SAG for GO bonds (funding for Non-Local Parks)
    - All executive departments and agencies (i.e. WSSC, Parks, MCPS, etc.) request County GO bonds.
    - Under SAG, the Council sets GO bond limits at the county-wide level.
    - Each January, the County Executive recommends funding levels for each department and agency to maintain consistency with SAG.

  - M-NCPPC's request for GO bonds is only a "slice of the pie" and it is much smaller than other departments and agencies.
  - The Council considers the Executive's recommendation for a breakdown by department or agency (how the "pie" will be "sliced"), but ultimately, the Council determines the final breakdown when it approves the CIP.
  - In the mid-2010s, the Council determined that debt payments associated with issuing these bonds were too high and began the process of lowering SAG significantly from $340 million per year to $270 million per year, levels similar to FY07 funding.
  - The Current CIP has a SAG limit of $320k in FY21 that contracts to $270k by FY26, which adds pressure to departments and agencies to reduce expenditures in future years.

- SAG for M-NCPPC Bonds that fund Local Parks
  - M-NCPPC is the only agency that programs Park and Planning Bonds (it has not just a "slice" of the "pie", but the whole "pie").
  - The Parks CIP may not exceed SAG without a supermajority vote by the County Council[1].
  - In both the FY19-24 CIP and the FY21-26 CIP, the Planning Board recommended raising Park and Planning bond SAG to $8.0 million per year (SAG at the time was $6.5M per year but was raised in outer years to $6.6 M and $6.7M to address inflation).
  - The requests came at a time that the Council was taking drastic measures to lower County debt (discussion above regarding GO bonds).
  - In the FY21-26 CIP the Council agreed to increase SAG to $8.0 M per year in FY21-22, but otherwise kept SAG at prior approved levels ($6.6 M for FY23 and $6.7 per year FY24-26).
  - Department staff have begun discussions with the Commission's Secretary-Treasurer and his staff to assess impacts of raising SAG to $8.0 million per year across all years of the FY23-28 CIP as approved by the Board in the prior CIP.
  - Staff expects to recommend extending the $8M SAG throughout the FY23-28 CIP in September when we present funding scenarios.

Fiscal Outlook for FY23-28

The County Executive held a series of Forums for the FY23-28 CIP in the fall of 2020 where he and staff from the Office of Management and Budget presented information about the CIP, including information about the fiscal health of the County. Parks CIP staff were in attendance to answer questions about the Parks CIP in breakout groups or before the respective area citizen advisory boards.

More recently, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) held a Capital Budget Kickoff Meeting on July 8, 2021 with budget representatives from County departments and outside agencies, including Montgomer Parks. In this meeting OMB provided a revised snapshot of the fiscal outlook and the County Executive's budget priorities. A portion of the OMB presentation is found starting **pages ©22-31**. Some key points of the OMB presentation that may affect how the County Executive receives the Board's CIP request include:

- County Executive's Priority Outcomes
  - Thriving Youth and Families
  - A Growing Economy

[1] Section 305 of the County Charter allows for the Council to approve a CIP that exceeds SAG if there is a super majority of at least 6 Councilmembers rather than the simple majority of five

  - A Greener County
  - Easier Commutes
  - A More Affordable and Welcoming County for a Lifetime
  - Safe Neighborhoods
  - Effective, Sustainable Government
- County Executive's Signature Initiatives
  - Advancing Racial Equity & Social Justice
  - Building Bus Rapid Transit
  - Expanding Early Care and Education
  - Fighting Climate Change
  - Improving Economic and Community Development
  - Preserving & Increasing Affordable Housing
  - Reimagining Public Safety
- CIP Priorities
  - Critical MCG Projects
    - Implementation of Rapid Transit System
    - Smart Growth Initiative MCPS Bus Depot
    - Imminent Safety Hazard (e.g. Bridge Repair)
    - Completion of projects already under construction
    - Other projects that support economic development
  - High Priority
    - Renovation of existing infrastructure that needs capital repair
    - Maintaining Level of Effort (LOE) projects (e.g. Roof Replacement, HVAC/Electrical Replacement, PLAR, Highway Maintenance, etc.)
    - Affordable Housing Acquisition and Preservation
    - New Projects that address 7 priority outcomes
  - Low Priority: Any new projects not contributing to the above priorities
- Fiscal Outlook
  - Focus on financial sustainability
    - Balanced budget
    - Slow down new debt
    - Increase budget reserves back to 10% by FY24
  - COVID-19 Impact Summary
    - Federal Funds cushioned revenue impacts in FY21
      - Received $31.8 million in FEMA/COVID reimbursements to date and continuing to apply for additional FEMA reimbursements
      - Received $183.3 million in CRF dollars and other federal aid for Mass Transit assistance and Housing assistance
      - Has been allocated $204.1 million in ARPA funding with $102.1 million received in June 2021; the remainder is anticipated before the end of FY22
      - Intergovernmental Relations (IGR)-coordinated effort to leverage infrastructure bill, earmark, and other federal/state funding
    - FY21 savings plan improved FY21 reserves and helped fund the operating budget.
    - Impact taxes were reduced due to growth policy changes (-$37.940M) – in Schools & Transportation
    - Recordation tax reductions (-$68.447M) – in Schools & Transportation
    - Council reconciliation assumed additional State Aid for MCPS ($15.245M) that is still unresolved

        - Capital Crescent Trail tunnel ($21.0M) that may not materialize
        - GO debt levels – TBD with October SAG – as of now, prior highs of $340M/year have been reduced to a low of $270M by FY26
        - Rebounding school enrollment
        - Construction cost increases and supply chain issues
        - Lifecycle issues on capital improvements (HVAC, Roof Replacement, Road Resurfacing and other level of effort project needs)
- Advancing Racial Equity
    - Cosing the gaps so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all
    - Focus on communities of color to target improvements for those most burdened by racial inequity
    - Moving beyond "services" to transform policies, institutions, and structures (i.e. systems)

Parks staff also received additional insights from OMB regarding pressures on the county-wide FY23-28 CIP.

- Although we are not expecting more reductions in the General Obligation bond and PAYGO funding levels, we do have several structural problems with the CIP related to school construction funding:
    - The MCPS CIP is very front loaded. Traditionally, MCPS submits a CIP with significant cost increases in the full year as they add construction funding for projects that only had planning funding programmed. There are probably three projects in this category – likely requiring $50M or more to fund construction. If past experience is any indicator, other projects will likely be deferred to accommodate many of these cost increases.
    - Council assumed additional State Aid funding for School Construction which may not be realized. The approved CIP assumes we will receive $24M more in FY22 than the state has currently approved. Additional State Aid assumptions add approximately $20M-$30M per year that have not yet been verified.
- Inflation has been increasing. If this trend continues, we will have less funds available to use for projects. For example, a 1% increase in inflation would result in a $31M decrease in available funds from FY23-FY26. Higher inflation rates would compound that effect.
- The FY23-26 available GO bond funds in set-aside is only $30M – to accommodate all agency new project and cost increase requests.

Public Feedback

An important part of the CIP process is to gather information and feedback from Montgomery County residents. The Department solicits and receives feedback and ideas from the public through its outreach efforts including:

- Feedback to department staff – Staff in the park system receive comments and feedback from park users which often results in staff submitting project requests through the Department's Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) System.
- County CIP Forums – Montgomery County Government holds CIP forums in each of the five Regional Service Centers. Typically, this happens in the spring and early summer, however, for the FY23-28 CIP, the County held these earlier in the budget cycle in September and October 2020. The County includes Parks staff on the agenda to present information about the Parks CIP, answer questions, and receive feedback. While staff made presentations to the public and answered questions in the recent forums, there were no specific project requests that were returned.
- M-NCPPC CIP Forum – The Planning Board held the forum on June 10, 2021 with invitations to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and to representatives of the Recreation Department to participate. At

the forum, citizens provided oral and written testimony regarding projects, concerns, and areas of interest that they feel should be considered in the upcoming CIP.

- Online Feedback – The Department hosted an Open Town Hall Meeting topic on its web page soliciting thoughts and ideas on the upcoming CIP. This was opened to the public from May 18, 2021 through June 17, 2021.
- Letters and other Communication to the Department and the Planning Board Chair - Residents have provided input regarding projects, concerns, and areas of interest that they feel should be considered in the upcoming CIP via written correspondence.

Below you will find a general breakdown of input received in the CIP Forum, Open Town Hall Meeting, and other direct correspondence organized by topic. Some responses fall into areas of maintenance or operating budget but are still summarized below. More detail, including staff responses are included on **pages©32-125.**

Topic	CIP Forum	Open Town Hall	Letters/emails	Total
Amenities				**50**
Dog Parks		1		
Ballfields		1		
Lighting		1		
Disc golf			1	
Restrooms		1		
Court Renovations		1		
Pickleball		35	2	
Racquetball		1		
Skate Parks	1	4		
Ice skating facilities		1		
Park Renovations and Development				**29**
Hillandale LP	1			
Carson Farm Park (access)		1		
Stoneybrook Local Park		1		
Acorn UP		1		
Long Branch		1		
Long Branch-Wayne		1		
Long Branch Arliss		1		
Flower Ave LP		1		
North Four Corners LP		1		
Brookside Gardens	1		1	
Black Hill		1		
Damascus RP		1		
Norwood LP		13	1	
Wheaton Regional Park	1	1		
Nature Centers				**23**
Brookside Nature Center	1		2	
General		1	2	
Black Hill SEED		1		
Locust Grove			16	
Access and General Use				**10**
Accessibility in parks		3		
Bike racks/parking		2	1	
Pedestrian Access			1	

Topic	CIP Forum	Open Town Hall	Letters/emails	Total
Transit Access		2		
Safe space for teen girls		1		
Community Gardens				**10**
Community Gardens		7	3	
Environmental Stewardship				**7**
Conservation in general		1		
Non-natives Invasive species		1	1	
Tree planting		1		
Water quality		2		
General maintenance		1		
Trails				**5**
Trails – general	1		1	
Long Branch, Sligo Creek		1		
Northwest Branch		1		
Damascus RP		1		
Acquisition				1
Damascus RP		1		

Overview of existing and new projects being considered for the new CIP

In this section, we will present an overview of projects, the majority of which already exist in the current CIP and will continue into the FY23-28 CIP.

At this time, Staff is not requesting that the Planning Board approve specific funding levels and timing of these projects. The purpose of this overview is, rather, to discuss projects generally within the framework of the Board's criteria and strategy (**page ©12-13**). Following this overview and strategy session, staff will use the Board's feedback to formulate CIP budgetary scenarios for consideration in the upcoming September work sessions.

Standalone projects

- Have a defined beginning and an end
- Typically, have completed and approved facility plans
- Include renovations of existing parks and/or construction of new parks
- Often have larger operating budget impacts (OBI)
- PDFs close out once appropriation has been spent and project is complete
- Example: Greenbriar Local Park (P078705)

There are eleven existing standalone projects that will continue into the FY23-28 CIP. Two were partially funded in the FY21-26 CIP. Remaining funding for these projects, as well as two unfunded projects, were shown in the "Beyond Six Years" (BSY) column representing funding in FY27 and beyond. The new CIP will add FY27 and FY28 and previous BSY funding will be considered for programming within FY23-28. A summary of all standalone project is provided on **pages ©126-128**.

Level-of-Effort Projects

- Ongoing projects that continue indefinitely
- Receive a certain amount of funding annually
- Fund multiple smaller subprojects of a similar nature

- Subprojects are reviewed and reprioritized as necessary
- Often have smaller operating budget impacts (OBI), however as the Department relies more on Level-of-Effort projects over Standalone projects, the aggregate OBI will grow
- Example: PLAR: NL - Playground Equipment (P998709)

While Standalone projects are often the most visible and lend themselves well for groundbreakings, ribbon cuttings, and events, the Level-of-Effort projects are the engine that drive the park system and keep it going year after year. Over the years, the park system has relied increasingly on Level-of-Effort projects to address aging infrastructure and increased use by a growing population. Level-of-Effort projects offer flexibility in responding to changing needs of the park system; however, since they don't represent any one place or constituency, they are sometimes viewed as easy targets for budget cuts.

There are two types of Level-of-Effort projects: Acquisition-related and Development-related. There are currently seven Acquisition PDFs and twenty-four Development PDFs. Summaries of these are found in the attachments starting on **page ©129-136**.

Initial Staff Outlook and Emerging Issues

As Parks staff reviews existing projects continuing into the new CIP, recent project requests, leadership directives, and public feedback, we must consider various factors, including:

- CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria for FY23-28 discussed with the Board in April
- Alignment with the 2021 Pros Plan Update
- Racial and Social equity
- Current fiscal climate, Spending Affordability Guidelines, Constraints of various funding sources within the CIP
- Aging infrastructure and ongoing condition assessments
- Changing mandates, industry standards, and emerging trends

There are several issues, subjects, and themes that we believe will shape the FY23-28 CIP:

Equity and A Strategy for Long Branch Area Parks

The quality and accessibility of parks is a basic component of equity in the delivery of public services. Parks are so integral to what makes a community desirable and healthy that ensuring equity developing capital budgets for park and recreation facilities is essential to achieving our goals for racial and socioeconomic justice. Parks has made major strides in recent years in identifying Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) and prioritizing capital budget recommendations accordingly, and we're committed to continuing to ensure that parks and recreation opportunities are accessible and equitably distributed.

We are continuing to analyze all of our parks with an equity lens by utilizing the EFA tool combined with our Energizing Public Spaces (EPS) analysis and direct analysis of our parks. As a result, Parks has begun development of a Long Branch Parks Initiative to improve and add amenities to parks in this EFA area in coming years.

The Parks in Long Branch are some of the oldest we have in our park system. While we have ample parkland in this area, we are park rich but amenity poor. Staff have begun the process of analyzing the

needs throughout these parks and have been identifying ways to efficiently increase the service delivery strategy in this area. These include:

- Prioritizing the Long Branch Trail Renovation, which is beginning construction
- Utilizing FY21 end of year money to add amenities to Flower Avenue Urban Park including social gathering spaces, game tables, swing benches and general aesthetic upgrades
- Designing a mini-refresher project at Long Branch-Garland LP, including expansion of the park into the Domer Avenue right-of-way and a signature bridge across Long Branch
- Completed a facility plan for the Long Branch-Wayne LP Park Refresher
- Began design of four trail bridge replacements with environmental enhancements, and in the planning stages for a northern extension of Long Branch Trail north of Piney Branch
- Exploring improvements to Long Branch Local Park
- Hosting a public meeting this fall to kick off the Long Branch Parks Initiative and learn about the community's needs

Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan

Park Planners are currently working on a comprehensive update to the 1987 Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan. While it remains one of the county's most popular regional parks, it is now 60 years old and needs rehabilitation, improvements, and new amenities.

Today, the communities surrounding the park are very diverse and this update will focus on providing facilities and amenities that better serve their needs. In addition, this master plan update will seek to improve access for bicycles and pedestrians. Wheaton Regional Park not only serves residents of the entire county, but also functions like a local park to many residents who live nearby and can easily walk or bike there to enjoy its numerous facilities and amenities.

Staff will also focus on enhancing opportunities for natural and cultural resource interpretation, improving efficiencies in operations and maintenance, and making the park feel safer and more welcoming. Staff anticipates presenting a draft plan to the Planning Board in fall 2021.

Currently, the Wheaton Regional Park Improvements PDF (P871904) starts funding design work in FY25. However, Parks has identified several infrastructure rehabilitations, trail/wayfinding improvements, and minor new amenities that can begin implementation sooner without affecting recommendations expected in the Master Plan update. Parks expects to recommend advancing funding for known needs with the FY23-28 CIP, with the anticipation of future modifications to implement long term recommendations.

Trails

One of the central goals of the Department of Parks is to develop a world-class trails network. To us, this means delivering opportunities for exceptional experiences for all of our trail users through a robust and connected network of high-quality, multi-use trails. It also means ensuring that everyone feels welcome on our trails and that our trails are accessible by everyone. We do this by building them throughout the entire county, ensuring they are well maintained, and publicizing information about our network of park trails.

Our network consists of over 70 miles of paved trails and 200 miles of natural surface trails. Thanks to the recent CIP increases, we have been able to make key investments. For example, using the increase

to the Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation PDF (P858710), we constructed a significant new bridge in Paint Branch Stream Valley Park and built a natural surface trail connecting Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Park with the White Oak community southeast of Columbia Pike.. The increase to the Trails: Hard Surface Renovation PDF has allowed us to advance additional resurfacing projects, including several important improvements Sligo Creek Trail, Long Branch Trail, and Rock Creek Trail.

However, due to the popularity of our aging existing trails and high demand for trail expansion, connections, and amenities, we will need additional resources to meet our goals and provide the opportunities for exceptional trail experiences desired by our patrons. Furthermore, increased storm events due to climate change are creating greater need for emergency rehabilitation work along our trails throughout the Stream Valley Parks. Parks expects these will likely be reflected in recommendations to increase some trail-related LOE PDFs.

South Germantown Recreational Park Adventure Playground Replacement

While the park system contains hundreds of community playgrounds and we conduct several playground replacements each year, our Regional and Recreational Parks have fewer but much larger and more complex playgrounds reflecting the fact that these are destination parks with much larger user groups. The SGRP Adventure Playground has exceeded its service life, and Operations is finding it much more difficult to maintain in recent years. Additionally, the existing play equipment models are outdated and no longer supported by the suppliers. Therefore, Parks has initiated preliminary design work for the replacement of this important amenity. We expect to complete the design in FY23 and begin construction of the replacement facility, which will require a short-term funding level increase in the PLAR: NL – Play Equipment (P998709) PDF. Staff expects this increase will likely be reflected in recommendations for this LOE PDF.

Aging Infrastructure and Emerging Trends

Our park system has been created over many decades and much of our existing infrastructure has exceeded its intended service life. Increased park usage, development pressures, and intensified weather events continually affect what we own and maintain on behalf of the community. Furthermore, changing demographics, urbanization, and societal norms call for constant adjustments to our amenity selection and design practices to meet the needs of residents while protecting our natural resources. Parks accomplishes much of this work through various Level-of-Effort PDFs, but particularly through the Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement (P968754 and P968755), Minor New Construction (P99863 and P998799), and Urban Parks Elements (P871540) PDFs, which allows us to combine rehabilitation with modernization and modifications to meet current and future needs. Parks expects growing needs will likely be reflected in recommendations to increase these LOE PDFs.

CONCLUSION

Within the context of issues raised in this memo and with additional guidance from the Planning Board, staff will begin developing funding scenarios for the FY23-28 CIP that will

- Deliver capital resources into Equity Focus Area (EFA) and Energizing Public Spaces (EPS) priority areas
- Reflect the priorities and evaluation criteria the Planning Board approved in April
- Responds to affordability including

    - A reasonable request for GO bonds that continues a focus on maintaining the existing park system and keeping up with growth
    - A Spending Affordability Guideline request for M-NCPPC bonds that the Commission deems affordable and is targeted to high priority projects
    - Leveraging federal and other funds to improve infrastructure and development in priority areas
- Assumes an appropriate amount of Program Open Space funding (with required matching M-NCPPC bonds) and maintains a reasonable level of risk
- Allows water quality related capital projects to begin moving again

In mid- and late September, the Department will present recommendations for specific funding amounts and allocations. The first work session will focus primarily on Local Parks funded primarily by Commission funding sources and Program Open Space as well as a recommended Spending Affordability Guideline for M-NCPPC bonds. The second work session will address the remainder of the CIP which will focus on Non-Local Parks funded by County and other funding sources. The Department will then return to the Board in mid-October an adoption session with final action on the entire proposed Parks FY23-28 CIP which will be transmitted to the County Council and County Executive on or before November 1, 2021.

Attachments and Supporting Documents

- The Current FY21-26 CIP 24, page ©1
- CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria FY223-28, page ©12
- Funding Sources in the CIP, page ©14
- Spending Affordability Guidelines, page©20
- Montgomery County Fiscal Outlook FY23-28, page©22
- Public Feedback, page ©32
- Standalone Projects, page ©126
- Level-of-Effort Projects, page©129

Strategy Session #2 Supporting Documents

The Current FY21-26 CIP

In May 2020 the County Council approved the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and the FY21 Capital Budget. In May 2021, a revised version of the FY21-26 CIP was approved, this time with the FY22 Capital Budget. Highlights of the CIP during these two years include:

Overall

- FY22 version of the CIP was approved on May 27, 2020
- 6-Year CIP:
  - $239,565,000
  - 2.2% decrease from the prior year's CIP of $245,000,000
  - The Parks CIP is 5.7% of the County's overall 6-year CIP of $4.182 Billion
- FY21 Capital Budget: $33,204,000
- FY22 Capital Budget: $45,719,000 (1.5% decrease from the prior year's FY22 proposed budget of $53,581,000)

New Projects

Added in FY21 and FY22

Legacy Urban Space (P872101)

- $18 million (FY21-26) added in FY22
- $3M/yr of Program Open Space funding transferred from other Acquisition PDFs
- In FY22, $950k of State grant funds were added for the Willett Branch Greenway (FY22 State grant of $550k and a transfer in of FY21 State Aid from the Acquisition-LP capital project that received the FY21 $400k grant for the greenway)
- Long-term goal: $150 million over 10 years
- For acquisition of valuable open space in the county's most densely populated areas
- Helps to implement the *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan*--a ground-breaking plan with a methodology for more equitably linking parks to populations in urban areas
- Modeled after the visionary $100 million Legacy Open Space capital project

Black Hill Regional Park: SEED Classroom (P872104)

- $650k, FY21-22
  - State Aid (bond bill) $250k
  - Contributions $150k
  - County bonds

- Redevelopment of an abandoned maintenance yard by converting it to an environmental-friendly educational site using the principles of Sustainable Education Every Day (SEED) Classroom design and construction. The building will be designed for net-zero energy and water usage and provides an expansion of the program space for the Black Hill Regional Park Nature Center Program.

Blair HS Field Renovations and Lights (P872105)

- $2.9 million, FY22-23
- County Bonds
- The Blair High School athletic field renovation project will include two surfaces which can be used for multiple sports for improved Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) athletic competition for practices and games for the largest high school in Maryland, improved safety and playability for the school's physical education program, and expanded community use in an area of high demand with limited land development opportunities. The proposed improvement projects are separated into two phases as the construction is proposed during a small window during MCPS's summer breaks. Both fields are proposed to have investments into soils, grading, drainage, lighting and irrigation to promote improved playability and safety for both the community and Blair High School students.
    - Phase one of the project will focus on the track field with improvements to include irrigation, drainage, grading, bermudagrass, portable goals and lights.
    - Phase two of the project will focus on the multi-purpose field directly behind the school with improvements to include irrigation, grading, bermudagrass, softball infield improvements, portable goals and lights.

S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field (P871746, Second Cricket pitch)

- $3.118 million, FY23-26
    - 981k County Bonds
    - $2.137 million Program Open Space
- Second Cricket Pitch, irrigation, field lighting, additional parking, and loop trail.

Mid-County Park Benefit Payments (P872201) – a new CIP project that will have $2,500,000 of appropriation in FY22 to receive park benefit payments from developments in the White Flint, Grosvenor-Strathmore, and Rock Spring areas. In lieu of dedication of park land and as a condition of development approvals, the Planning Board may accept substantive contributions toward acquisition of new land to meet these master plan recommendations. These funds are intended to create new park resources, as opposed to the renovation/modification of existing parks. Funds that are allocated for planning, design, and construction of parks will be transferred to the appropriate development capital project within the CIP. Expenditures will be based on the park priorities within

each of the master/sector plan areas, availability of land for acquisition, site improvement needs, and the Parks Departments' design and construction schedule.

Power Line Trail (P872202) - The State Budget includes $10,000,000 of grant funding for Montgomery County to build the Powerline Trail project. When complete, the 13-mile natural-surface and paved trail will connect South Germantown Recreational Park to Cabin John Regional Park. The initial portion of the trail, a six-mile, single-track, natural-surface trail, opened in 2018 connecting South Germantown Recreational Park to Muddy Branch Stream Valley Park in North Potomac. Ultimately, the trail will extend as a paved trail from the Muddy Branch Trailhead into Cabin John Regional Park.

Projects that got a boost

Projects that were increased in the FY21-26 CIP above and beyond the FY19-24 CIP included:

Ballfield Initiatives

- $5.251 million increase over 6 years
    - $1.2M for field renovations at MCPS school sites
    - $4.0 million FY21-26
        - Lifecycle replacement of our fields at current funding is 30-40 years. We are striving to reduce this to 8-10 years to keep pace with acceptable industry standards
        - Responding to the increased demand for youth baseball fields by re-purposing many of our under-utilized adult softballs fields
        - Adding lights to fields to maximize field utilization
        - Adding irrigation to improve the quality and safety of the fields
        - Transitioning from a two-tier categorization of ballfields to a three-tier structure based on performance standards such as practices, game, level of competition, etc.

Bethesda Park Impact Payment

- $5 million in appropriation to receive contributions, FY21-22
- $10 million appropriation to receive contributions through FY20
- Focus
    - Three Civic Greens
    - Urban Greenways
    - Neighborhood greens

Energy Conservation: Local Parks

- $407k, 6 yr comparison

Energy Conservation: Non-Local Parks

- $550k, 6 yr comparison

Enterprise Facilities Improvements

- $4.925 million, 6 yr comparison

Facility Planning: Local Parks

- $500k, 6 yr comparison
- Maintain base funding of $300k for FY21, otherwise $400k/yr
- The increase helps to address the planning and design required to support the Department shift to a Park Refresher approach for park renovations in local parks

Josiah Henson Historic Park

- $150k, FY21, to address damage from termites and tie-ins to utilities discovered during renovation

Minor New Construction: Local Parks

- $455k 6 yr comparison

Minor New Construction: NL Parks

- $2.340 million, 6 yr comparison

Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park

- $2.9 million of Program Open Space added
- Total Project cost $8.2 million

Park Refreshers

- $755k, 6 yr comparison
- Projects in various stages include:
    - Dewey LP
    - Edith Throckmorton NP
    - Silver Spring Intermediate LP
    - Carroll Knolls LP
    - Caroline Freeland UP
    - Long-Branch-Wayne LP
    - Columbia LP
    - Woodside UP
    - Acorn UP

Planned Lifecycle Asset replacement: Local Parks

- $1.712 million, 6 yr comparison
    - Court renovations: $324k
    - Minor Renovation: -$251 (decr)
    - Park Building Renovations: $370
    - Play Equipment: $655k
    - Resurfacing: $464k

Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement

- $7.133 million, 6 yr comparison
    - Court renovations: $1.68 million
    - Minor Renovation: $821
    - Park Building Renovations: $1.15 million
    - Play Equipment: $1.2 million
    - FY20-21 Current Playground Projects
    - Resurfacing: $2.45 million

Pollution Prevention

- $1.075 million, 6 yr comparison

Restoration of Historic Structures

- $400k, 6 yr comparison

Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements

- Appropriation only – increase allows us to accept and spend more contributions without having to request authorization from the County Council
- $3.050 million

Stream Protection

- $950k, 6 yr comparison

Trails: Hard Surface Renovation

- $2.0 million, 6 yr comparison

Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation

- $1.2 million, 6yr comparison

Vision Zero

- $1.5 million, 6yr comparison

Other Significant Capital Projects

- **Brookside Gardens Master Plan** - $1.7 million, includes planning for a new conservatory and renovations to the rose garden, Design FY22, Construction FY23
- **Hillandale Local Park renovation -** $5.7 million, Construction through FY22
- **Josiah Henson Historic Park** – Completion of the $5.3m project in FY21
- **Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area** – $50k, all prior funding was shifted out of the CIP and the project will be closed out in the FY23-28 CIP
- **North Branch Trail** - $4.672 million, Construction through FY23
- **Northwest Branch** - $4.950 million, Initial design funds introduced to FY26, Funds the additional improvements envisioned to accompany the athletic fields that were constructed with funding from the ICC
- **Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park** - $8.2 million, Construction through FY25
- **Wheaton Regional Park Improvements** - $5 million, Design begins FY25,subject to future recommendations of the Park Master Plan

State Bond Bills & Grants

FY21

CIP Project/PDF	Project		Amount
Panned Lifecycle Asset Replacement: Local Parks--Play Equipment (P998703)	Olney Family Neighborhood Park	To provide an additional playground facility to meet active recreation needs for the community	$200,000
Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation (P858710)	Fairland Recreational Park	To establish a natural surface bike trail skills track to serve a wide range of users with varying skill levels.	$100,000
Acquisition: Local Parks (P767828)	Willet Branch Greenway	To acquire land to create the planned Willett Branch Greenway in the Westbard community.	$400,000
Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement: Local Parks--Minor Renovation (P998702)	Long Branch-Garland Neighborhood Park	To replace the playground and provide additional neighborhood amenities within the park, including improved paved trail connections and green space.	$350,000
		Total	**$1,050,000**

FY22

CIP Project/PDF	Project		Amount
Ballfield Initiatives (P008720)	Damascus Recreational Park	Athletic field lighting installed at Field 3 or 4	$225,000
PLAR NL: Minor Renovations (P998708)	South Germantown Recreational Park	Recreational Park upgrade including the installation of a parking lot at the bike skills area with ADA enhancements	$150,000

Legacy Urban Space (872104)	Willet Branch Greenway	Acquire land to create the planned Willett Branch Greenway in the Westbard community.	$550,000
Trails Hard Surface: Renovation (P888754)	Randolph Hills Local Park	Replace trail bridge and renovate the hard surface trail connector from Randolph Hills LP to Rock Creek Trail	$150,000
Trails Hard Surface: Renovation (P888754)	Wheaton Regional Park Trail Renovation	Renovate the hard surface trail from Narin Road to the dog park access road	$200,000
PLAR NL: Minor Renovations (P998708)	Long Branch/Domer Ave Signature Bridge	Replace existing trail bridge with a new signature bridge at Long Branch Trail near Domer Avenue with trail head	$200,000
		Total	**$1,625,000**

Affordability Reductions and Delays

In September 2020, the Council approved a cost savings plan for FY21. Later, in January 2021, the Department also worked with County Council on reductions in FY22 that were incorporated in the FY22 Capital Budget and FY22 version of the FY21-26 CIP adopted in May 2021.

FY21 Reductions (GO Bonds)

- Energy Conservation (P998711) – Non-Local Parks, $10,000
- Minor New Construction (P998763) – Non-Local Parks, $80,000
- Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park (P871745), delayed, not reduced) - $100,000
- PLAR: NL – Park Building Renovations (P871903) - $81,000
- PLAR: NL – Play Equipment (P998709) - $55,000
- PLAR: NL – Resurfacing Lots and Paths (P871554) - $166,000
- PLAR: NL – Court Renovations (P998715) - $81,000
- Trails: Hard Surface Renovation (P888754) - $55,000

FY22 Reductions/Delays

- Current Revenue in FY22 ($485,000)
  - Acquisition: Non-Local Parks (P998798) - $50,000
  - ADA Compliance: Non-Local Parks (P128702) - $50,000
  - Facility Planning: Non-Local Parks (P958776) - $50,000
  - Legacy Open Space (P018710) - $50,000
  - PLAR: NL – Minor Renovations (P998708) - $85,000
  - PLAR: NL – Park Building Renovations (P871903) - $50,000
  - Pollution Prevention Repairs to Lakes and Ponds (P078701) - $50,000
  - Restoration of Historic Structures (P808494) - $50,000
  - Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements (P058755) - $50,000
- GO bonds in FY23-25 ($1,441,000) – funding delays only
  - Legacy Open Space (P018710) – Delay $1,441,000 into FY26 (FY23: $500k, FY24: $500k, FY25: $441k)
  - S. Germantown Rec: Cricket Field (P871746) – Delay $250,000 from FY24 into FY25, No delay to completion of project or overall reduction to project budget
  - Wheaton Regional Park Improvements (P871904) – Delay project start 1 year ($250,000 delayed from FY24 into FY25)

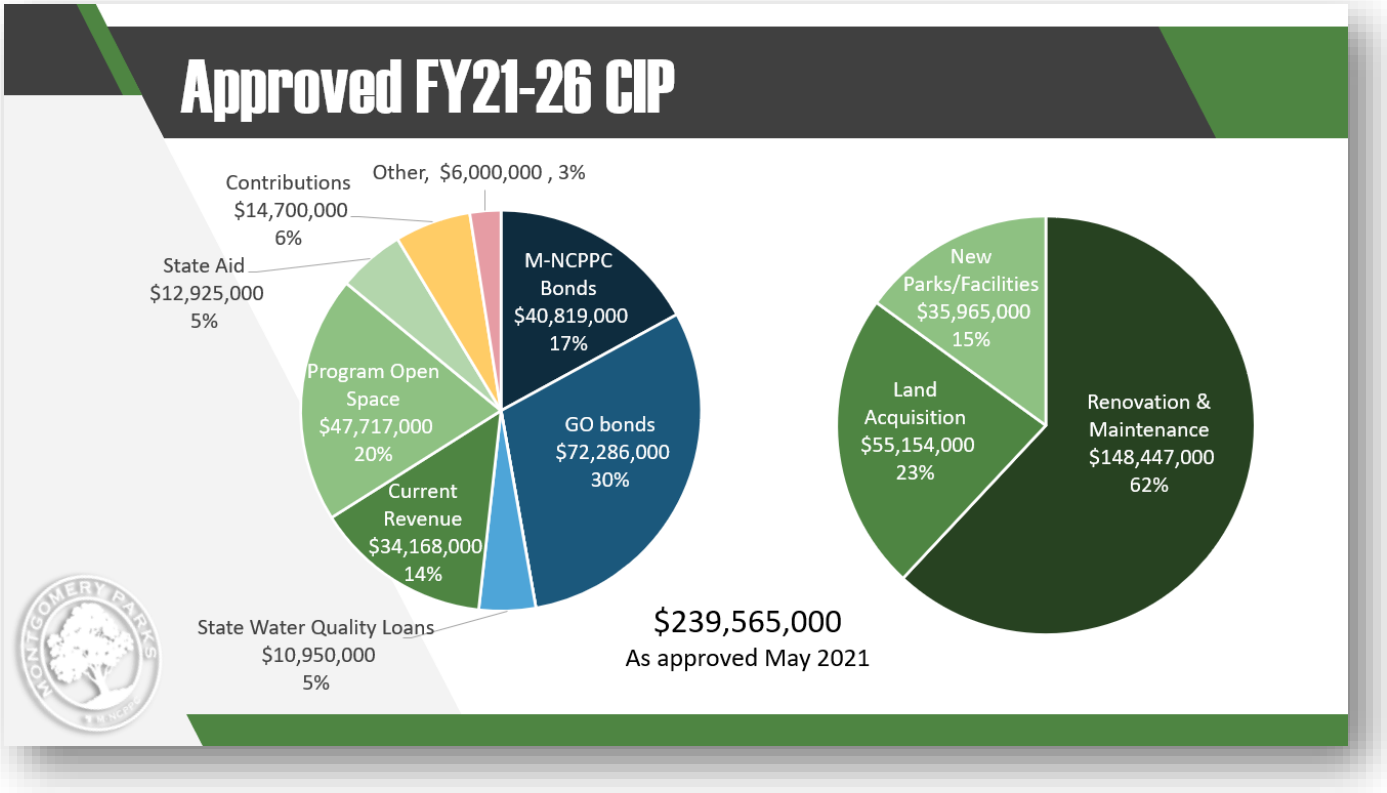
- Enterprise Facilities' Improvements (P998773) – $20M indefinite deferral of funding (revenue bonds). The currently approved project description form (PDF) for this capital project includes $20,000,000 of revenue bond funding that was to be spent in FY22. However, as the Enterprise Fund has been seeing significant impacts due to the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) economy, the Enterprise Division has determined that they will need to delay the Ridge Road Ice Rink project. The Division is in the process of reviewing Enterprise Fund revenue forecasts to determine the extent of the delay. In the meantime, the revenue bonds for this project have been delayed beyond FY26 and the appropriation request for FY22 is being adjusted accordingly. In the spring of 2021, when the Parks Department is preparing the FY23-28 CIP, we hope to better understand the pandemic-related fiscal impacts to the fund and will provide a more realistic recommendation for when the rink project can be reintroduced into the CIP.

Closeout Projects

- Battery Lane Urban Park (P118701)
- Roof Replacement: Non-Local Pk (P838882)
- Western Grove Urban Park (P871548)
- Little Bennett Regional Park Trail Connector (P871744)
- Magruder Branch Trail Extension (P098706)
- Seneca Crossing Local Park (P138704)

Funding Sources, FY21-26

Funding comes from various sources. Montgomery County Bonds (GO Bonds) and Current Revenue (cash) fund larger parks and system-wide improvements while M-NCPPC Bonds and Current Revenue fund local parks. Program Open Space is a significant funding source from the State of Maryland's transfer tax. This CIP also features some revenue and long-term financing supported by the Water Quality Protection Charge to county residents and property owners. We also receive funds from a myriad of other sources that include grants, contributions, enterprise revenues, and federal aid.



Categories, FY21-26

The Parks' CIP projects generally fit in one of the following categories:

- Renovation and Maintenance – repair, renovation, and lifecycle replacement of existing park facilities and supporting infrastructure. This includes natural, cultural, and historical resources on parkland.
- New Parks and Park Facilities – responding to unmet park and recreation needs.
- Land Acquisition – continued commitment to preservation of parkland through Legacy Open Space and park acquisition programs.

Category	Amount	Percentage of Six-Year CIP
Renovation and Maintenance	**$148,447,000**	**62%**
Land Acquisition	**$55,154,000**	**23%**
New Parks and Park Facilities	**$35,965,000**	**15%**

The highest percentage of the CIP "pie" is dedicated to maintenance and renovation. The primary focus of the CIP is to optimize what we have currently in the park system. The Department continues to invest more on maintenance and renovation projects as infrastructure continues to deteriorate and rehabilitation tends to alleviate our operating budget of substantial maintenance costs. While new parks and park facilities are necessary to keep up with a growing population and increased demand on the parks, these parks and facilities create operating budget impacts (OBI). Because of the tight fiscal climate, the Department has focused on ways to keep OBI as low as possible. However, we cannot entirely forego funding for new parks as the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan and other planning guidance continue to identify park needs across the County that should be addressed. This means that the Department must be conscious about designing and developing new facilities by finding innovative methods to reduce OBI, without compromising their historical/cultural integrity or environmental best management practices and mandates.

Maintenance and renovation is deemed a high priority by both the Board and Council. Although we have made progress in addressing infrastructure replacement needs in our system, there is still much work to be done to catch up with needed renovations in the parks.

Theoretically, funding for maintenance and renovation should increase from one CIP cycle to the next as existing infrastructure continues to deteriorate and more parks and amenities are added to our park system. It becomes increasingly difficult to maintain our existing parks when new facilities continue to be built. Additionally, as the Department and the County government are so close to the top of their Spending Affordability Guidelines, and as the County is reducing the guidelines, it is difficult to propose new parks and large-scale renovations of existing parks which adds to the demands for renovation and maintenance funding. Therefore, staff recommends continuing to give higher priority to renovation projects when evaluating new projects for the FY23-28 CIP as well as to increase some maintenance and renovation funding sources to meet the increasing demand and to keep up with increasing costs associated with construction prices, regulations and permitting. Surveys used in preparing the PROS Plan support this approach to optimize what we have.

FY21-26 CIP Program by Expenditure Category

Coucil Adopted May 27, 2021

PDF #	Project (PDF)	Six Year Total	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
	LAND ACQUISITION							
	Continued commitment to preservation of parkland through Legacy Open Space and park acquisition programs							
767828	Acquisition: Local Parks	4,900	650	1,650	650	650	650	650
998798	Acquisition: Non-Local Parks	4,400	700	700	750	750	750	750
727007	ALARF: M-NCPPC	6,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
872002	Bethesday Park Impact Payment	5,000	2,500	2,500	0	0	0	0
018710	Legacy Open Space	12,479	1,036	2,528	2,150	2,100	2,024	2,641
872104	Legacy Urban Space	19,875	3,000	4,875	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
872201	Mid-County Park Benefit Payments	2,500	0	2,500	0	0	0	0
	Category Total	**55,154**	**8,886**	**15,753**	**7,550**	**7,500**	**7,424**	**8,041**
	NEW PARKS & PARK FACILITIES							
	Responding to unmet park and recreation needs							
P872101	Black Hill Regional Park: SEED Classroom	650	400	100	150	0	0	0
998773	Enterprise Facilities' Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
998799	Minor New Construction - Local Parks	2,305	400	450	360	364	365	366
998763	Minor New Construction - Non-Local Parks	4,470	620	700	750	800	800	800
871541	North Branch Trail	1,152	0	200	952	0	0	0
118704	Northwest Branch Recreational Park-Athletic Area	620	0	0	0	0	0	620
	Ovid Hazen Wells RP	7,524	200	1,000	2,500	2,550	1,274	0
058755	*Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements (50%)**	*3,250*	525	525	550	550	550	550
	South Germantown RP Cricket Field	3,118	0	0	195	786	1,780	357
768673	Trails: Hard Surface Design & Construction	1,800	300	300	300	300	300	300
871540	*Urban Park Elements (50%)**	*1,076*	250	300	148	138	118	122
872202	Power Line Trail	*10,000*	0	800	3,350	3,700	2,150	0
	Category Total	**35,965**	**2,695**	**4,375**	**9,255**	**9,188**	**7,337**	**3,115**
	MAINTENANCE & RENOVATION							
	Repair, renovation, and lifecycle replacement of existing park facilities and supporting infrastructure							
128701	ADA Compliance: Local Parks	4,850	760	860	880	800	800	750
128702	ADA Compliance: Non-Local Parks	5,900	950	950	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
008720	Ballfield Initiatives	13,275	1,550	2,525	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
872105	Blair HS Field Renovation and Lights	2,900	0	1,400	1,500	0	0	0
078702	Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation	1,700	0	250	950	500	0	0
977748	Cost Sharing: Local Parks	450	75	75	75	75	75	75
761682	Cost Sharing: Non-Local Parks	300	50	50	50	50	50	50
998773	Enterprise Facilities' Improvements	3,450	2,550	400	0	0	500	0
957775	Facility Planning: Local Parks	2,300	300	400	400	400	400	400
958776	Facility Planning: Non-Local Parks	1,700	250	250	300	300	300	300
	Hillandale Local Park	3,000	2,500	500	0	0	0	0
967754	PLAR - LP	21,095	4,190	3,940	3,266	3,318	3,183	3,198
871902	Park Refreshers	20,340	3,300	3,900	3,504	3,438	3,326	2,872
968755	PLAR - NL	28,115	4,010	4,993	4,778	4,778	4,778	4,778
058755	*Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements (50%)**	*3,250*	*525*	*525*	*550*	*550*	*550*	*550*
888754	Trails: Hard Surface Renovation	4,695	645	1,050	700	700	800	800
858710	Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation	3,300	800	500	500	500	500	500
871540	*Urban Park Elements (50%)**	*1,076*	250	300	148	138	118	122
87904	Wheaton Regional Park Improvements	3,000	0	0	0	0	720	2,280
871905	Vision Zero	3,400	700	700	500	500	500	500
871552	Josiah Henson Special Park	1,012	1,012	0	0	0	0	0
808494	Restoration Of Historic Structures	3,170	450	450	500	500	635	635
998710	Energy Conservation - Local Parks	629	150	150	70	83	86	90
998711	Energy Conservation - Non-Local Parks	790	90	100	100	150	150	200
078701	Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds & Lakes	6,700	950	950	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
818571	Stream Protection: SVP	8,050	2,900	1,350	950	950	950	950
	Category Total	**148,447**	**28,957**	**26,568**	**24,221**	**22,230**	**22,921**	**23,550**
	GRAND TOTAL	**239,565**	**40,538**	**46,696**	**41,026**	**38,918**	**37,681**	**34,706**

The chart to the left is a summary, grouped by expenditure category, of the current Adopted FY21-26 CIP.

CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria FY23-28

April 15, 2021

These criteria and areas of focus guide the evaluation and prioritization of projects for the Capital Improvements Program for FY23-28.

Immediacy and Efficiency

The project:

- Addresses public health, safety, and welfare
- Prevents degradation of existing facilities and avoids costly future repairs
- Preserves natural, cultural, or historic resources that are under threat
- Achieves compliance with code requirements and/or laws
- Needs to be timed with related projects by other agencies
- Increases revenue, achieves cost savings, and/or improves operational efficiency
- Leverages an opportunity, such as a partnership, donation, or grant

Equity and Need

The project:

- Promotes racial equity and social justice by improving park access, services, or facilities in Equity FocusAreas (EFAs)
- Provides facilities to an under-served geographic area or population group
- Implements recommendations of adopted plans (e.g. Thrive 2050, PROS, Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan, park master plans, area and sector plans, functional plans)

Project Priorities

The project:

- Renovates or expands both natural and hard surface trail systems
- Improves availability and quality of ballfields
- Activates and improves Urban Parks, focusing on urban areas with older infrastructure and limited open Space

Acquisitions and Access

Acquisitions will:

- Target urban park needs and high-density areas
- Provide opportunities for natural resource-based recreation
- Improve connections between parks and expand trail networks
- Protect, restore, or enhance natural resources

Project Delivery

Increased focus on:

- Park Refreshers rather than large-scale park redevelopments
- Utilizing level-of-effort projects to maintain what we have and more quickly implement park modifications to meet changing community needs
- Use of in-house staff resources and interdepartmental partnerships
- Simplified Facility Planning that allows flexibility to adapt to changing needs through project development

Funding Sources in the CIP

Limited Fluidity of funding: Park classification and purpose-driven funding sources

The park classification usually drives the source of funds. The bulk of funding for parks classified as Local Parks comes primarily from M-NCPPC's own bonds and current revenues as well as Program Open Space Funding from the State. Larger, Non-Local Parks, such as Regional and recreational parks, are funded primarily with County general obligation (GO) bonds and County current revenue.

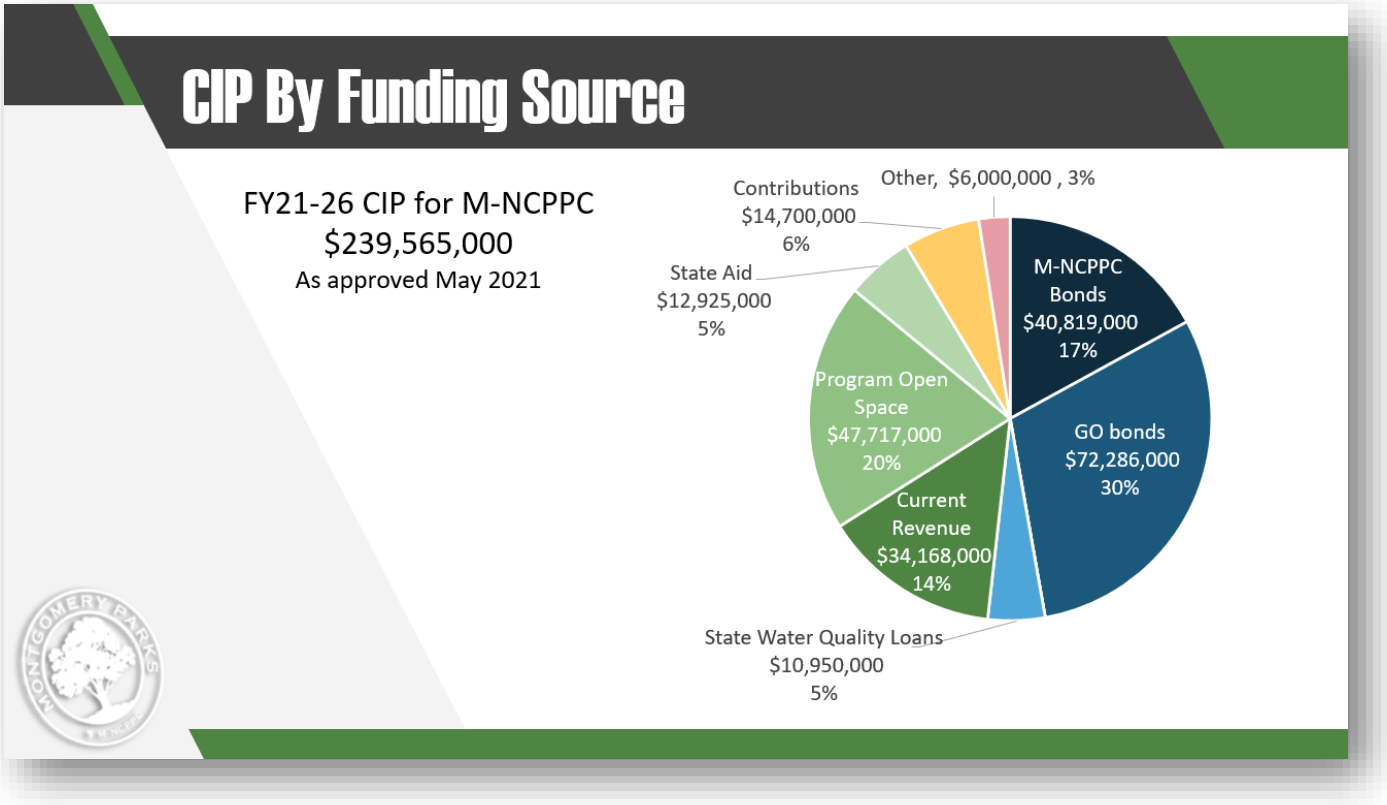
There are also funding sources that are exclusive to certain capital projects or programs. For instance, funding for water quality projects that address pollution prevention or protection of streams are backed by the County's Water Quality Protection Charge (WQPC), either in the form of direct revenues or WQPC backed loans from the State. In another example, Enterprise Division facilities, such as ice arenas, trains, carousels, boating facilities, events centers, associated infrastructure, etc. are funded by user fees that pay for facilities directly or are used service enterprise specific bonds.

The examples of park classification and purpose-driven funding are mentioned primarily to illustrate that funding in the CIP is not 100 percent transferable. For instance, if the Department identified a need for an additional playground in a neighborhood park within the existing CIP, it couldn't simply delay renovation project on an Enterprise ice rink or not renovate a soccer field in a recreational park to fund the playground because the funding is tied to certain classifications or uses.

Overview of Funding Sources in the CIP

The current CIP for FY21-26 CIP is $239.6 million. In comparison, the FY19-24 CIP was approved at $235.8 million[1]. The current CIP is approximately $3.8 million or 1.6% more than the previous CIP. The bulk of that increase is due to increased revenues from non-County and non-Commission sources (State Aid, Contributions, and State financing for water quality projects), with only marginal increases in County and Commission funding (bonds and current revenue).

[1] The CIP approved in May 2019 at $234.7 M was amended in July 2019 for the addition of State Aid received in April 2019.



The primary types of funding include GO bonds, Park and Planning Bonds, Current Revenue and other sources.

GO Bonds

These are general obligation bonds issued by Montgomery County to fund CIP projects in parks classified as county-wide parks, also known as non-local parks. They include regional parks, recreational parks, special parks, stream valley parks, conservation area parks, and county-wide urban parks. They are issued by Montgomery County and are used to fund projects in most department and agencies CIPs in the County. As such, park projects funded with these are competing with other non-park projects such as schools, utilities, roads, and government buildings. The County's Debt Summary describes them as follows:

> County general obligation bonds are secured by the full faith, credit and taxing powers of the County. Bonds are normally issued with a 20-year term, with five percent of the principal retired each year. This practice produces equal annual payments of principal over the life of the bond issue and declining annual payments of interest on the outstanding bonds. The Charter limits the term of any bond to 30 years.
>
> Over the past three decades the composition of County general obligation debt has changed. As more general County bonding was shifted towards schools and roads, a related shift occurred away from general County facilities, parks, and mass transit. In addition, in recent years, general obligation debt has

not been issued to finance parking lot district or solid waste projects. Such projects have been financed with revenue bonds or current revenues.

The County typically issues its general obligation bonds once annually, in the spring. The proceeds are used to retire short-term Bond Anticipation Notes/commercial paper (BANs).[2]

M-NCPPC Bonds

Sometimes referred to as "Park and Planning Bonds," these bonds are also general obligation bonds issued by M-NCPPC to fund CIP projects in parks typically classified as community-use parks, also known as Local Parks. They include neighborhood parks, local parks, neighborhood conservation area parks and community use urban parks. The County's Debt Summary describes them as follows:

> The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) issues general obligation debt for the acquisition and development of local parks and certain special parks and advance land acquisition, with debt limited to that supportable within mandatory tax rates. The Commission also issues revenue bonds funded by its enterprise operations. Pursuant to Section 6-101 of Article 28 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1997 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement), the County must guarantee payment of principal and interest on the debt of M-NCPPC that is not self-supporting.[3]

Current Revenue

A funding source for the Capital Budget which is provided annually within the Operating Budget from general, special, or enterprise revenues. Current Revenues are used for funding project appropriations that are not eligible for debt financing or to substitute for debt-eligible costs.

Current Revenue comes from Montgomery County Government, while other current revenue comes from M-NCPPC and is spent respective to the park classifications discussed for bonds.

[2] https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/bonds/debt.html
[3] Ibid

Program Opens Space

Program Open Space is a component of Maryland's land preservation programs. Established in 1969 by the Maryland General Assembly, POS funds the acquisition and development of state and local parks as well as the conservation of natural resources and open spaces. Funding for this important program comes from a 0.5% transfer tax on every real estate transaction in the state, which the Maryland General Assembly initiated in order to ensure that a dedicated funding source existed for parks and recreation.

M-NCPPC is the local governing body for Montgomery County and receives an annual allocation that it may use for open space acquisition and park development in the county Parks CIP or as a pass through to municipalities.

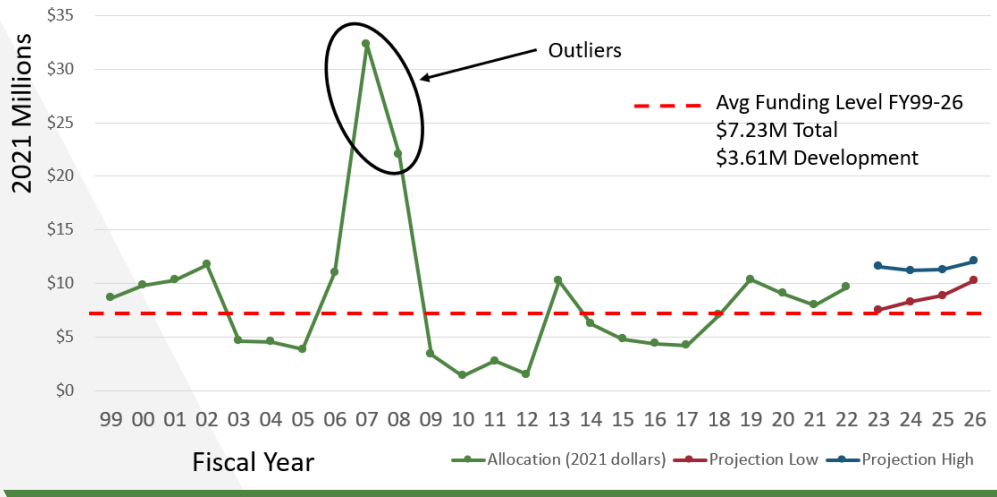
The fundamental challenge for POS is that we only know what is available for the next fiscal year. Also, in the past, the available revenue has varied, dramatically at times. After the recession of 2007-2009, housing transactions plummeted, and the State began using some of the transfer tax revenues to fund gaps in the State budget. Despite commitments from the State to pay back diverted funds in future years, this had a double-chilling effect on what had been a reliable source of funding. Locally, it slowed down some of the projects in the Parks CIP and made it impossible to fund many municipality requests that typically come through the Commission.

The good news is that the economy and real estate markets have steadily improved and in 2016 the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation (HB 462) that limited the use of transfer tax revenues for purposes other than acquisition or development of open space. The legislation also requires full and timely repayment when funds are used to temporarily bridge State Budget gaps. The results of legislation and the economy are that this funding source has caught up with the backlog of projects in the CIP, annual allocations to the Commission have increased to healthier levels.

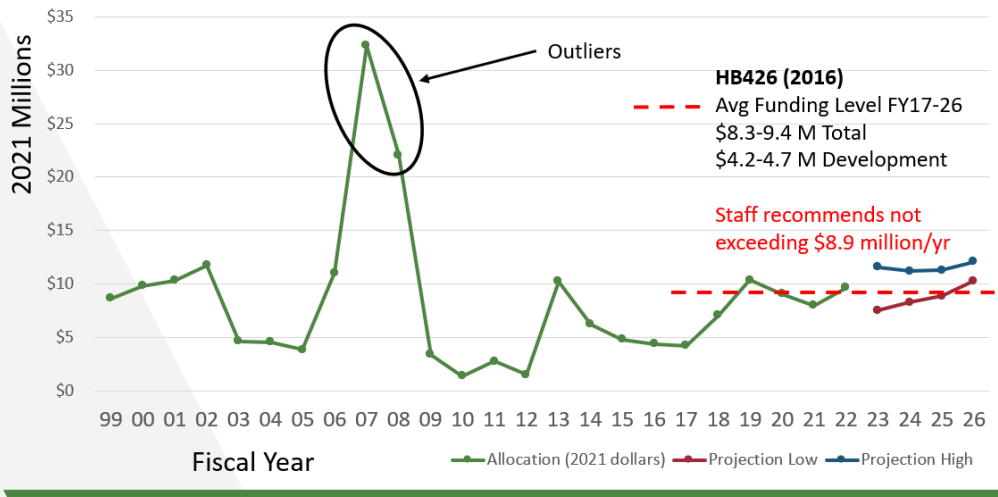
While the 2016 legislation created a new era for POS, it is important not to forget that past performance fluctuated and wildly depending on the economy and the political climate. Until there is more of an established track record for POS under the new legislation, staff will continue to analyze performance of POS long term (back to FY99) and shorter term (back to FY17 the first allocation after HB462).

On the next page are two charts. One that looks back at POS performance since FY1999 and another that focuses on the current era (FY17-26) since the passage of HB462. Together the charts indicate that a conservative range for programming POS in the next CIP could range between $7-9 million per year. The current CIP is programmed at about $8.0 million per year. However, , the most recent FY22 allocation came in at $9.6 million, which included some payback. In the FY23-28 scenarios that the Board will consider in September work sessions, staff will likely recommend POS programming between $8 and $9 million per year. It is also important to keep in mind that current State law requires that the first half of POS be set aside for acquisition. This leaves the remaining half to fund the County Development program and some pass-through funding to municipalities.

POS: Long-term View



POS: Short-term View



POS projects in the current CIP include:

- Josiah Henson Park
- Dewey Local Park
- Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park
- Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park
- Hillandale Local Park
- Carroll Knolls Local Park
- Caroline Freeland Urban Park
- Long Branch-Wayne Local Park
- Columbia Local Park
- Woodside Urban Park
- Jessup Blair Local Park
- New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park
- Long Branch Local Park
- Acorn Urban Park

Other Funding Sources

These include:

- Contributions – Funds that come from individuals or organizations, typically through the Montgomery Parks Foundation. It also includes the contributions from developers (i.e. Bethesda Park Impact Payment and Mid-County Park Benefit Payments)
- Federal Aid – Funding from the federal government including grants, such as $2m that the North Branch Trail project received in the form of a TAP grant.
- PAYGO - "Pay as you go" funding; that is, current revenue substituted for debt in capital projects that are debt eligible or used in projects that are not debt eligible or qualified for tax-exempt financing.
- Revolving (P&P only) - The Commission established a continuing land acquisition revolving fund from which disbursements for such purchases may be made. The purchase must be shown in the Commission's general plan for the physical development of the regional district or in an adopted plan. The acquisition requires the approval of the District Council of Montgomery County.
- State Aid – Funding coming from the State of Maryland, including any grants or through bond bills. FY 22 saw a significant increase when it received $11.6 M, whereas it is typically around $1M in a productive year.
- Long Term Financing – In the Parks CIP, this is funding that comes from State loans through the Water Quality Financing Administration and fund project in the Department's two water quality capital projects Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds & Lakes and the Stream Protection: Stream Valley Parks.

Spending Affordability Guidelines

Going into budget season each year, the County Council sets Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG) that determine essentially how much debt they are willing to take on to fund the capital budget and CIP[4]. The Council reviews several financial components in establishing SAG. The primary two SAG limits the Council sets that affect the Parks CIP are limits on two types of bonds which together fund 47% of the Parks CIP[5]. The two types of bonds are Montgomery County General Obligation bonds (GO bonds) and the Commission's Park and Planning bonds. SAG essentially places a maximum dollar limit on bond funding in the CIP.

SAG - GO Bonds

SAG for GO bonds are set with respect to the County's overall bond issuance, so there is no guideline set specifically for a department or agency. However, the Council does consider a recommended breakdown by department and agency, but it may change that breakdown when it approves the CIP several months later, provided the overall level of programming stays within SAG. Essentially, if a department or agency increases GO bonds in its portion of the overall County CIP, another department or agency must diminish their CIP.

For GO bonds, the Council has recently been transitioning SAG to lower levels. After a few years at $340 million per year in FY16-18, to ease the debt service payments for bonds, the Council began in FY19 to transition SAG downward, the currently adopted SAG for the FY21-26 CIP transitions from $320k per year to $270K by FY26; levels not seen since around 2007. Considering the Council's decision to decrease SAG, it is unlikely that the Council will raise the SAG for GO bonds any time soon. With this in mind, it is likely that the County Executive will not recommend any increases that the Board may propose in this next CIP above and beyond what has already been approved for FY21-26. Further, the expectation is likely that the Board will also be expected to keep GO bonds in FY27 and 28 at similar levels to FY26.

If M-NCPPC's share of County GO bonds is roughly 4.2% of the overall GO bond share[6], and if SAG for FY27 and 28 is $270k then M-NCPPC's share of the SAG is roughly $11.340 million per year. This means that if we do not program more than $11.340 million per year in GO bonds, the M-NCPPC CIP should theoretically not contribute to the County exceeding SAG for GO bonds overall. The table below summarizes SAG for GO bonds in the adopted CIP:

	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	Average
GOB SAG ($millions)	320	310	300	290	280	270	295
Parks programming	8.500	13.258	13.997	11.637	11.933	12.961	12.048
Percent	2.7%	4.3%	4.7%	4.0%	4.3%	4.8%	4.1%

[4] Montgomery County Charter, Section 305

[5] FY21-26 CIP for Parks is $239.6M. GO Bonds are $72.3 M. Park and Planning Bonds are $40.8M. Total bond funding is $113.1m or 47% of the CIP.

[6] The Countywide FY21-26 CIP is funded with $1.74 B in GO bonds. GO bonds for M-NCPPC are $72.3 B, or 4.2%

SAG - Park and Planning Bonds

Since the Commission is the only agency that uses M-NCPPC bonds (a.k.a. "Park and Planning bonds"), the SAG limit is set specifically for M-NCPPC. Unlike SAG for GO bonds that are set over four years, SAG for M-NCPPC Bonds is with respect to the full 6 years of the CIP.

Park and Planning bonds SAG is currently at $8.0 million per year for FY21 and 22, $6.6 M for FY23 and $6.7 per year FY24-26. Originally the Council set it at an even $6.5 million per year, but outer years in the prior years were raised to address inflation assumptions.

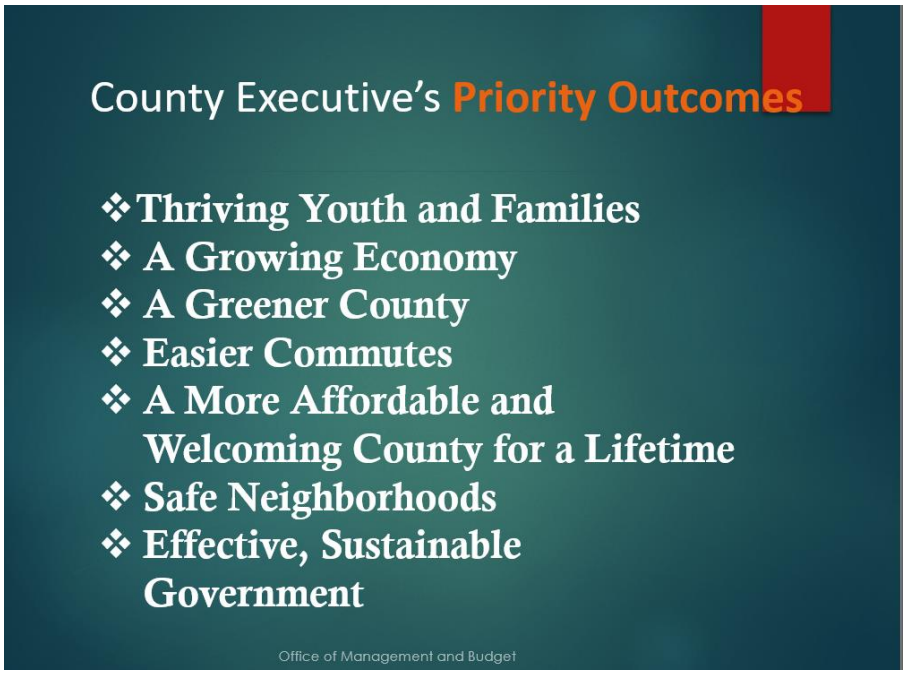
The request to set all years at $8.0 million per year goes back to November 2018 when the Board transmitted its proposal for the FY19-24 CIP and requested that the $6.5 million per year SAG limit be raised to $8.0 million. At the time, this was deemed affordable by the Commission's own measures. However, as the Council was considering the Board's request in February 2019, it was at the same time the Council was making drastic reductions to GO bonds (mentioned above) which made it difficult for the Council to raise SAG limits for M-NCPPC bonds while drastically lowering SAG limits for GO bonds.

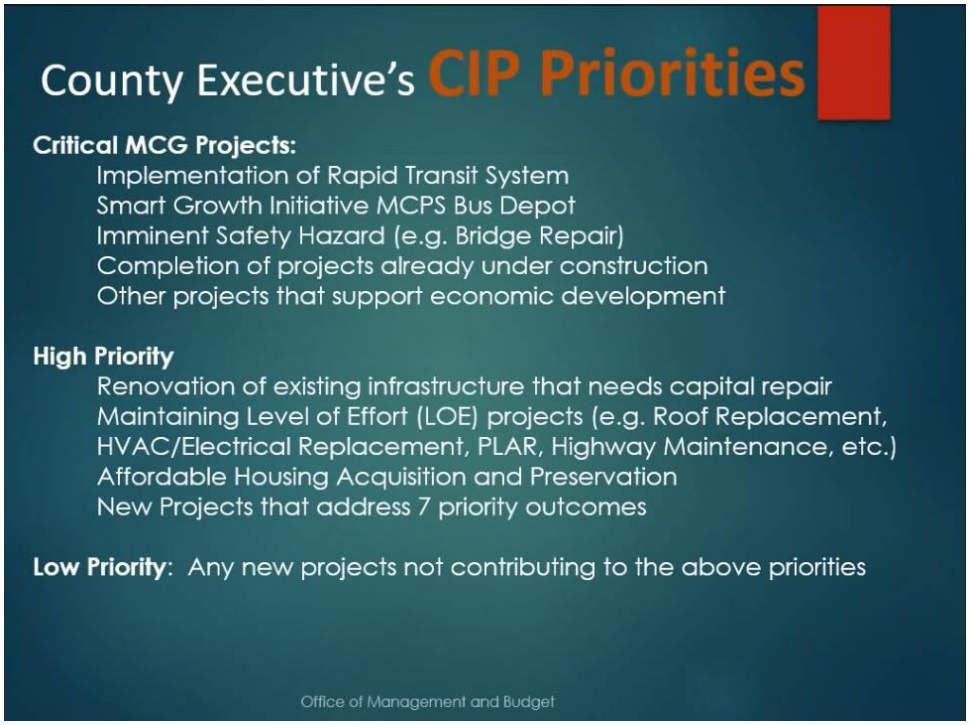
Department staff have begun discussions with the Commission's Secretary-Treasurer and his staff to assess impacts of raising SAG to $8.0 million per year across all years of the FY23-28 CIP as approved by the Board in the prior CIP. Staff will return to the Board in September with more information and a recommendation regarding either to keep or modify SAG for Park and Planning Bonds.

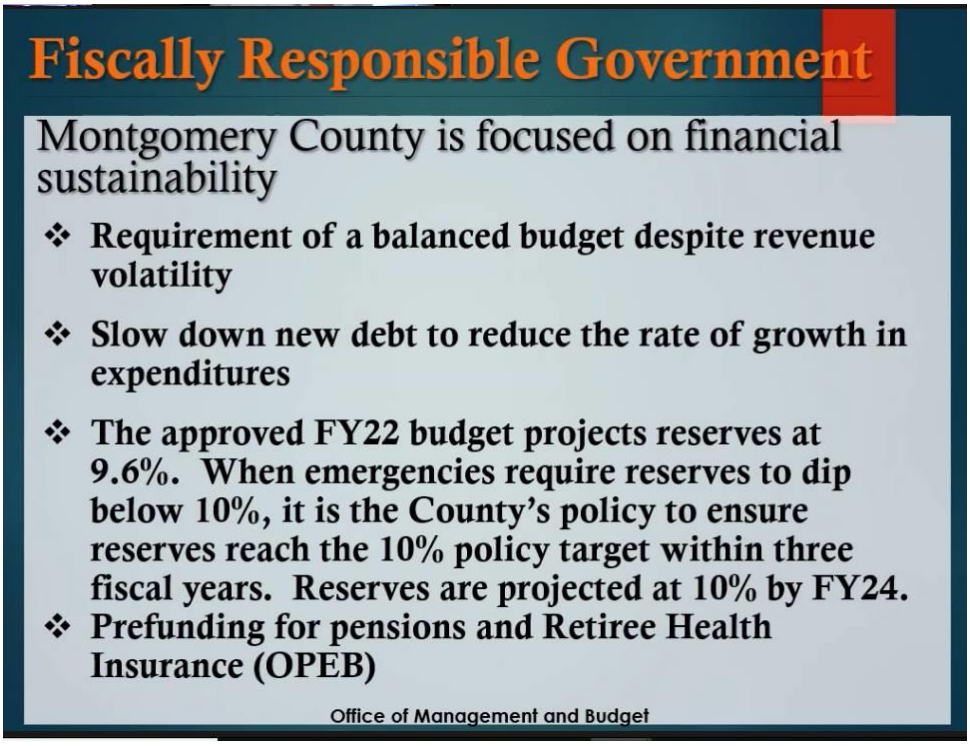
Department staff have begun to coordinate with the Commission's Secretary-Treasurer and his staff to assess to what level the current SAG is affordable and what extent the Commission may or may not be able to raise SAG further to accommodate new projects and increases in upcoming FY23-26 CIP. Staff will return to the Board in September with more information and a recommendation regarding to either keep or modify SAG for Park and Planning Bonds.

Montgomery County Fiscal Outlook FY23-28

From the FY23-28 CIP Kickoff meeting for Montgomery County Departments and outside Agencies on held on July 7, 2021




County Executive's CIP Priorities
Critical MCG Projects:
Implementation of Rapid Transit System
Smart Growth Initiative MCPS Bus Depot
Imminent Safety Hazard (e.g. Bridge Repair)
Completion of projects already under construction
Other projects that support economic development
High Priority
Renovation of existing infrastructure that needs capital repair
Maintaining Level of Effort (LOE) projects (e.g. Roof Replacement, HVAC/Electrical Replacement, PLAR, Highway Maintenance, etc.)
Affordable Housing Acquisition and Preservation
New Projects that address 7 priority outcomes
Low Priority: Any new projects not contributing to the above priorities
Office of Management and Budget


Fiscally Responsible Government
Montgomery County is focused on financial sustainability
Requirement of a balanced budget despite revenue volatility
Slow down new debt to reduce the rate of growth in expenditures
The approved FY22 budget projects reserves at 9.6%. When emergencies require reserves to dip below 10%, it is the County's policy to ensure reserves reach the 10% policy target within three fiscal years. Reserves are projected at 10% by FY24.
Prefunding for pensions and Retiree Health Insurance (OPEB)
Office of Management and Budget

Fiscally Responsible Government

COVID-19 IMPACT SUMMARY

- Year-end FY21 results are pending but preliminary information seems to indicate that federal support for individuals and businesses cushioned some of the COVID revenue impacts
- Received $183.3 million in Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) dollars - COVID-19 expenses as well as additional federal aid for Mass Transit assistance and Housing assistance
- Allocated $204.1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds - $102.1 million received in June 2021 and the remainder to be received before the end of FY22
- The County Executive recommended, and the County Council approved two FY21 Savings Plans (operating budget and CIP cash) to help improve FY21 estimated reserves

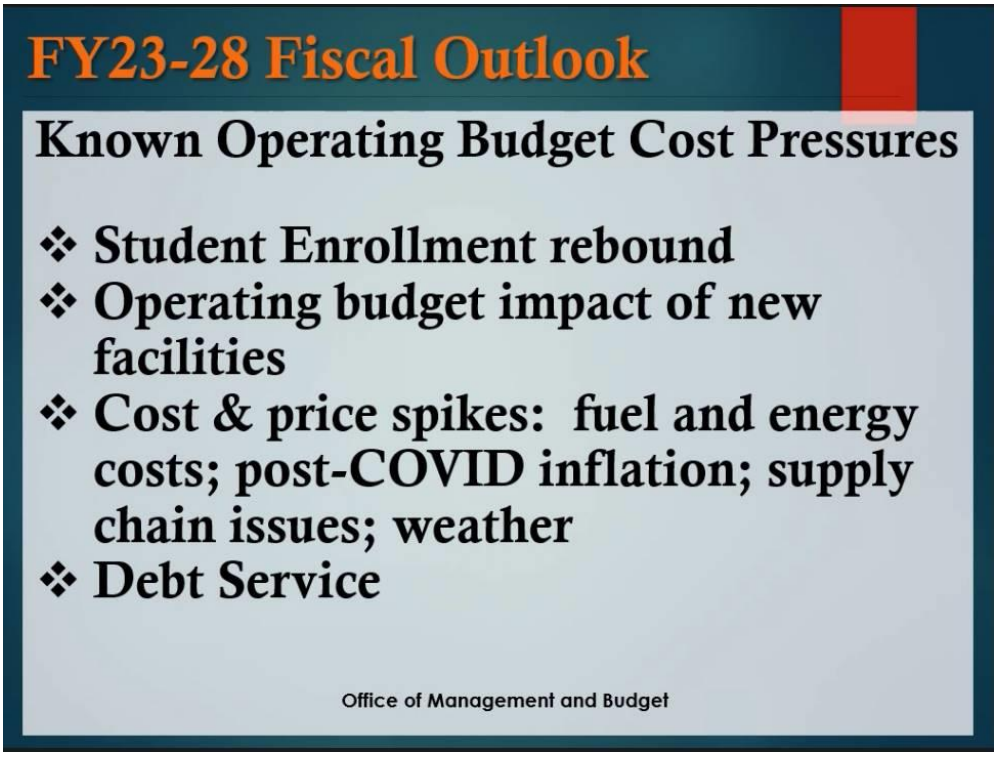
Office of Management and Budget

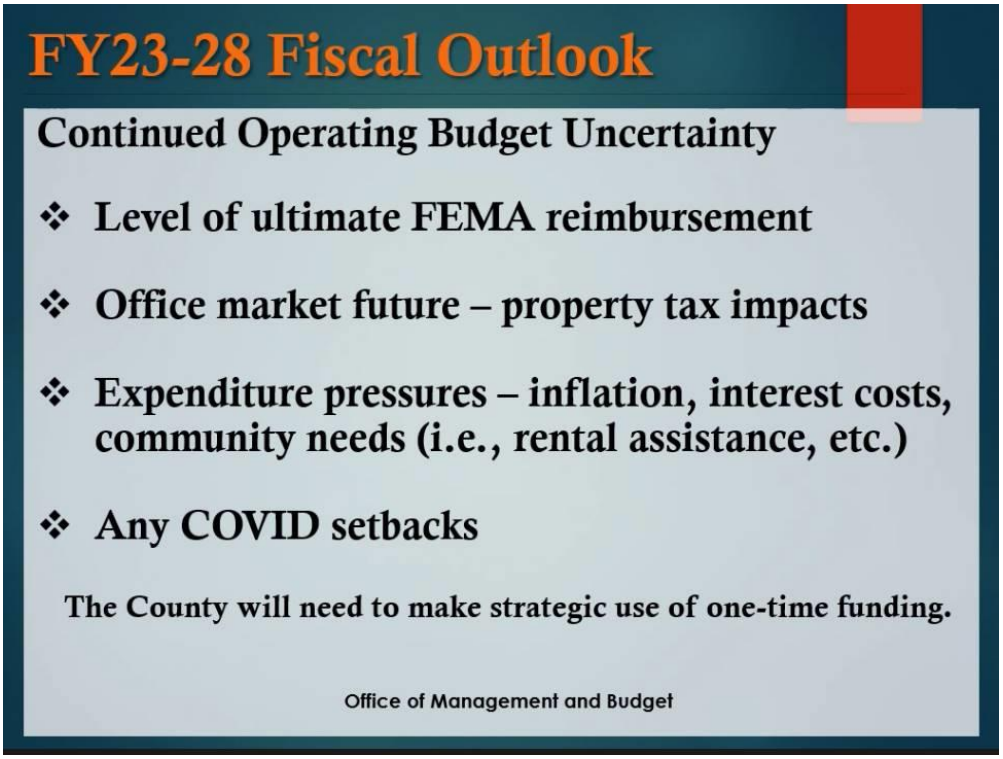
FY23-28 Fiscal Outlook

COVID – 19

- Pursuing federal assistance –
  - Received $31.8 million in FEMA/COVID reimbursements to date and continuing to apply for additional FEMA reimbursements
  - Received $183.3 million in CRF dollars and other federal aid for Mass Transit assistance and Housing assistance
  - Has been allocated $204.1 million in ARPA funding with $102.1 million received in June 2021; the remainder is anticipated before the end of FY22
  - IGR-coordinated effort to leverage infrastructure bill, earmark, and other federal/state funding

Office of Management and Budget


FY23-28 Fiscal Outlook
Known Operating Budget Cost Pressures
❖ Student Enrollment rebound
❖ Operating budget impact of new facilities
❖ Cost & price spikes: fuel and energy costs; post-COVID inflation; supply chain issues; weather
❖ Debt Service
Office of Management and Budget


FY23-28 Fiscal Outlook
Continued Operating Budget Uncertainty
❖ Level of ultimate FEMA reimbursement
❖ Office market future – property tax impacts
❖ Expenditure pressures – inflation, interest costs, community needs (i.e., rental assistance, etc.)
❖ Any COVID setbacks
The County will need to make strategic use of one-time funding.
Office of Management and Budget

FY23-28 Fiscal Outlook

Biennial CIP Fiscal Factors

- PAYGO (-$41.400M) and Current Revenue (-$16.5M) reductions to help fund the operating budget
- Impact tax reductions due to growth policy changes (-$37.940M) – in Schools & Transportation
- Recordation tax reductions (-$68.447M) – in Schools & Transportation
- Council reconciliation assumed additional State Aid for MCPS ($15.245M) and the Capital Crescent Trail tunnel ($21.0M) that may not materialize.
- Additional State Aid for transportation and other projects

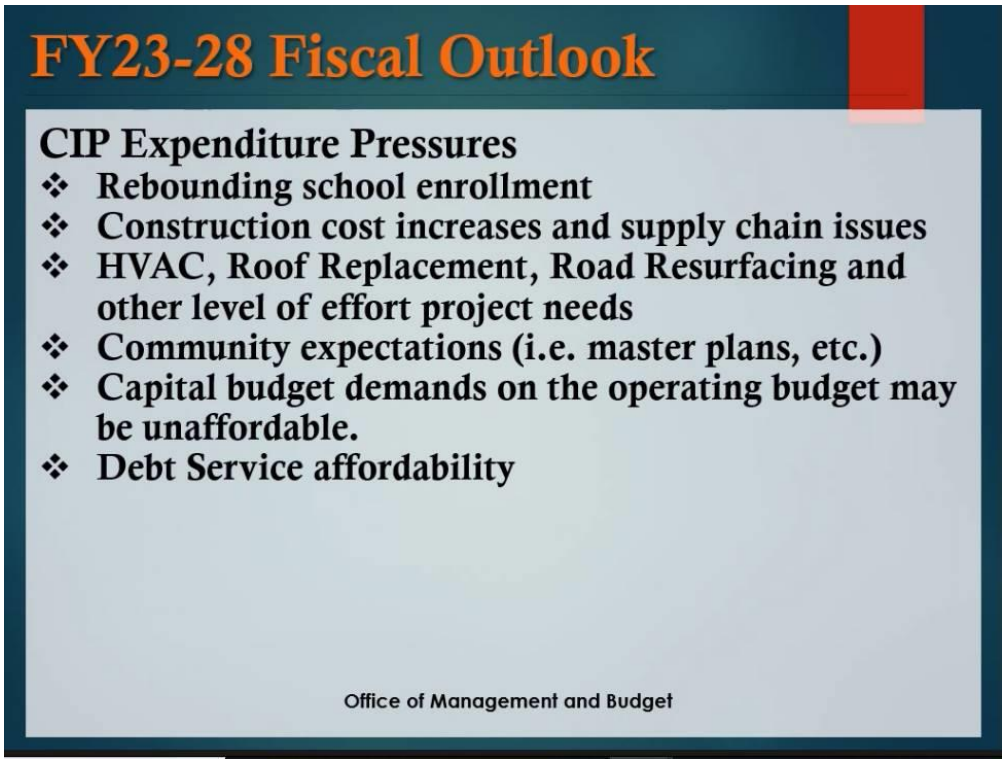
Office of Management and Budget

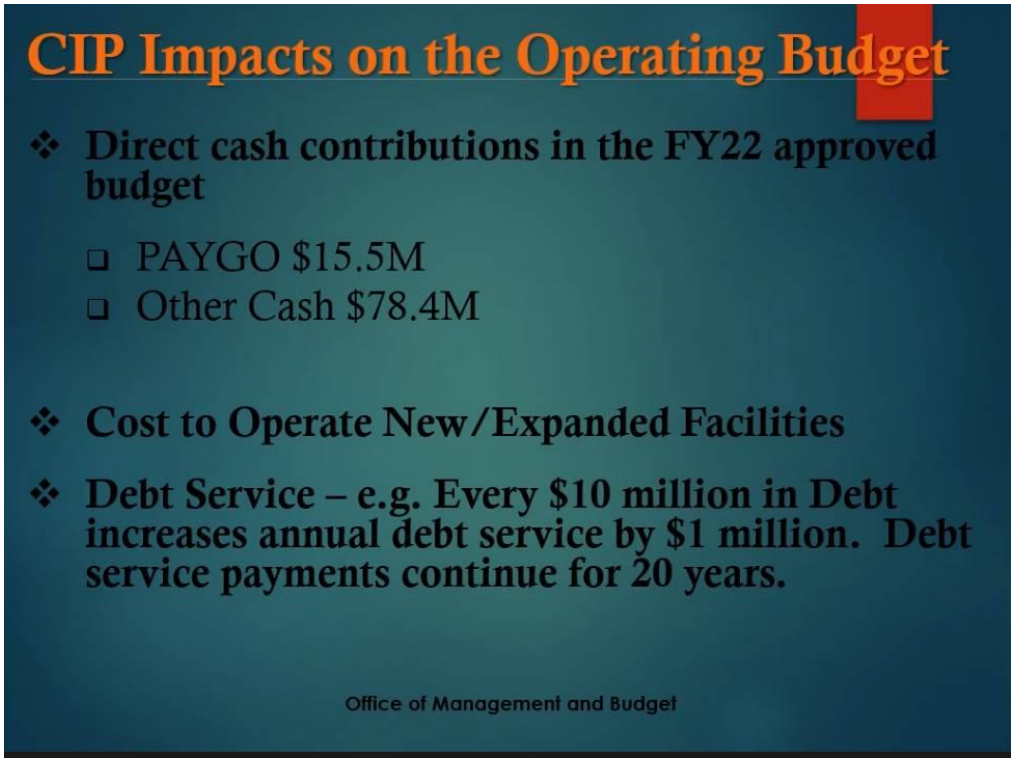
FY23-28 Fiscal Outlook

CIP Funding Considerations

- GO debt levels – TBD with October SAG
- Annual high at $340M/year – now a low of $270M in FY26
- Expect PAYGO to return to 10% of GO policy level
- Impact Taxes – Council reductions to be maintained
- Recordation Taxes – may be increased
- School State Aid – very uncertain
- Pre-election cycle – limited opportunities for tax increases
- IGR federal/state funding requests

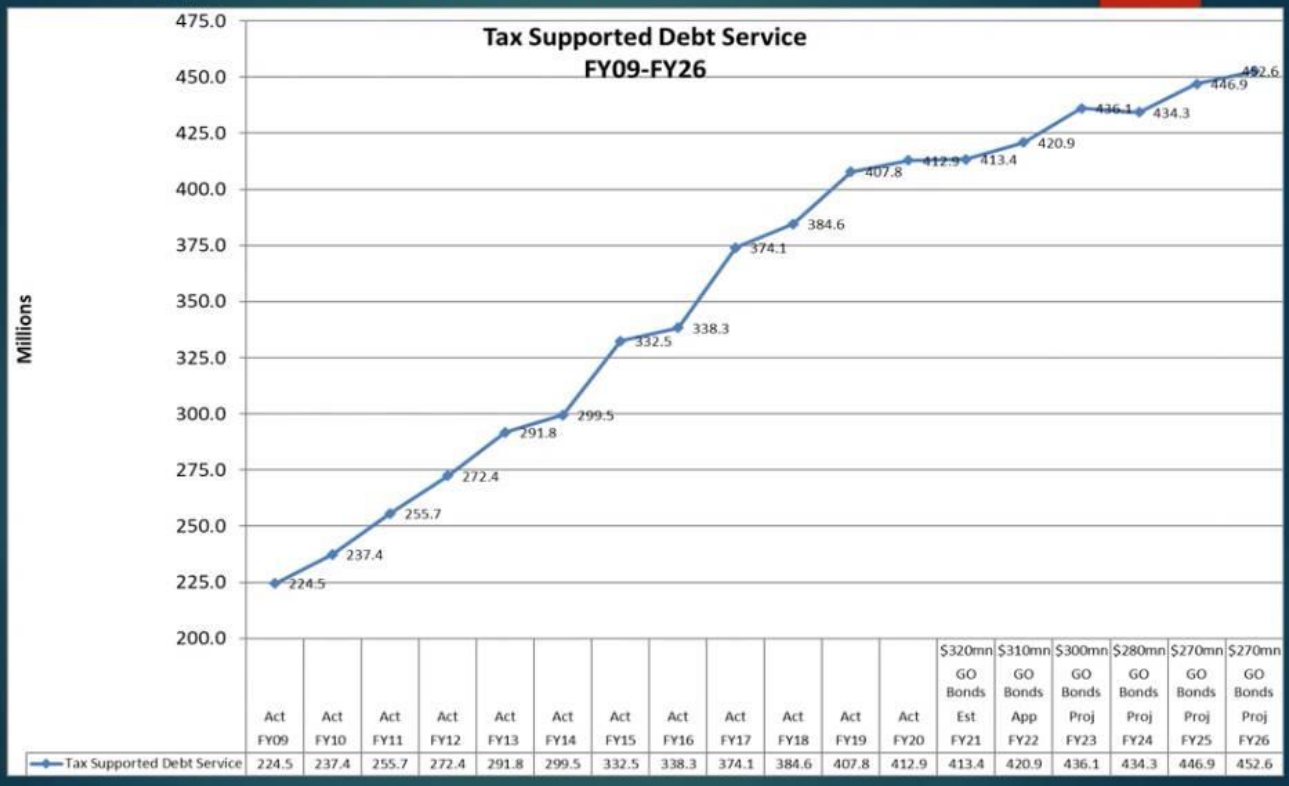
Office of Management and Budget


FY23-28 Fiscal Outlook
CIP Expenditure Pressures
Rebounding school enrollment
Construction cost increases and supply chain issues
HVAC, Roof Replacement, Road Resurfacing and other level of effort project needs
Community expectations (i.e. master plans, etc.)
Capital budget demands on the operating budget may be unaffordable.
Debt Service affordability
Office of Management and Budget


CIP Impacts on the Operating Budget
Direct cash contributions in the FY22 approved budget
PAYGO $15.5M
Other Cash $78.4M
Cost to Operate New/Expanded Facilities
Debt Service – e.g. Every $10 million in Debt increases annual debt service by $1 million. Debt service payments continue for 20 years.
Office of Management and Budget

FY23-27 Fiscal Outlook

Tax-Supported Debt Service, FY09-FY26



	Act FY09	Act FY10	Act FY11	Act FY12	Act FY13	Act FY14	Act FY15	Act FY16	Act FY17	Act FY18	Act FY19	Act FY20	$320mn GO Bonds Est FY21	$310mn GO Bonds App FY22	$300mn GO Bonds Proj FY23	$280mn GO Bonds Proj FY24	$270mn GO Bonds Proj FY25	$270mn GO Bonds Proj FY26
Tax Supported Debt Service	224.5	237.4	255.7	272.4	291.8	299.5	332.5	338.3	374.1	384.6	407.8	412.9	413.4	420.9	436.1	434.3	446.9	452.6

Office of Management and Budget

Debt Service Opportunity Costs

Every $1 million used for debt service could also be used for:

- 14 public school teachers
- 9 police officers
- 9 fire fighters
- Operating 1 library for a year (except for large libraries such as Silver Spring and Rockville)
- Operating 8 Senior Centers
- Operating 5 Recreation Community centers
- Operating 3 Elementary School Excel Beyond the Bell Programs
- Rental assistance for 416 families
- Emergency shelter for 160 clients
- Respite care for 324 clients
- Child care subsidies for 143 children for a year
- Services for 4,428 Montgomery Cares clients
- 1,274 County-funded Maternity Partnership program
- 1,594 Housing Stabilization grants
- Pruning 2,150 trees
- Purchasing 2 buses
- Renovations for 250 bus stops

Advancing Racial Equity

- **Racial Equity means … Closing the gaps so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all.**
- **To close the gap… we focus on communities of color to target improvements for those most burdened by racial inequity**
- **Moving beyond "services" to transform policies, institutions, and structures (i.e. systems)**
- **OMB and ORESJ will hold several listening/learning sessions in July/August to clarify expectations and help departments prepare their submissions**

Advancing Racial Equity

- Justification Section includes an opportunity to explain the project's potential racial equity impacts. Prior to moving to the justification Section, please check the box that most closely reflects your assessment of this project proposal:
  A) Yes, this project considers potential racial equity impacts
  B) I'm not sure whether this project considers potential racial equity impacts
  C) No, this project does not consider potential racial equity impacts

- Justification: Explain what changes are needed to existing projects and why they are needed. Explain why new projects are needed (e.g., addressing poor facility condition, inadequate capacity, health and safety issues, racial disparities, and/or consistent with strategic facility or master plans, etc.). Include information about expected progress in advancing priority outcomes.

Advancing Racial Equity

If you answered option A or B in the previous question, please use the racial equity impacts prompts below in your justification:

a. What racial inequities in Montgomery County have you considered in this new project request?

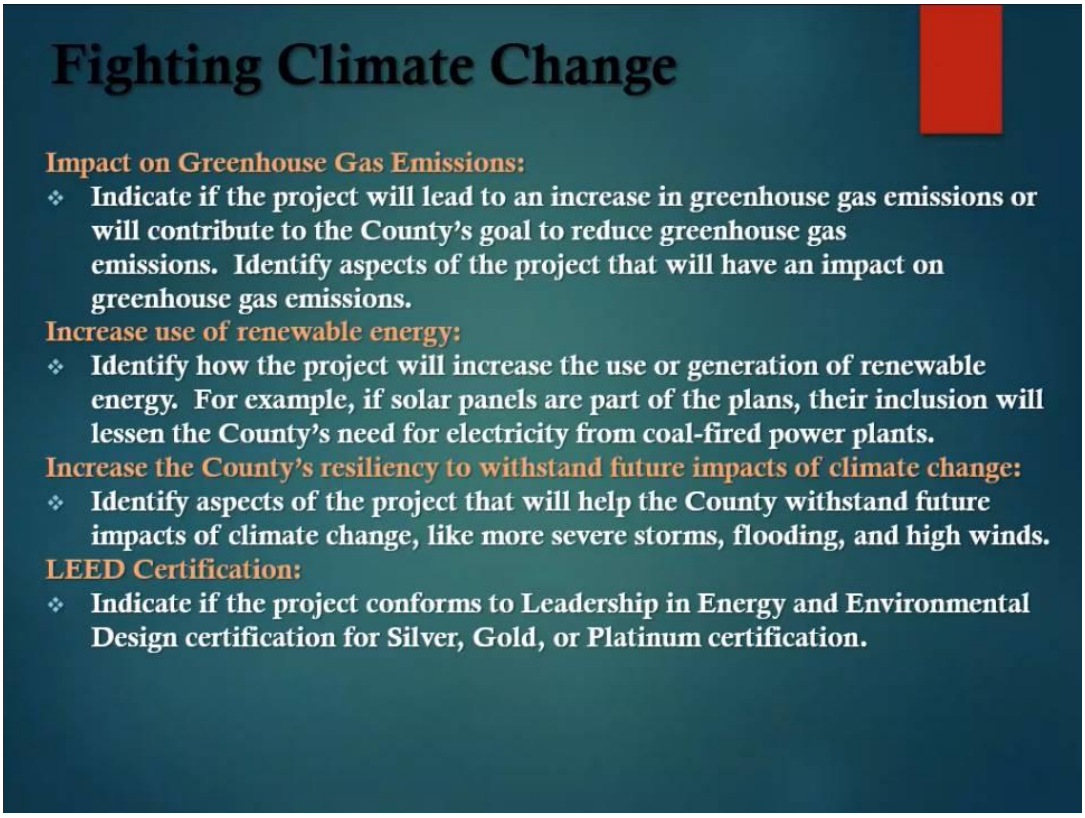
b. How were these racial inequities considered? What data sources did you identify and analyze? What did the data tell you? Possible sources of information include quantitative and qualitative data:

i. the demographic composition of the neighborhood served (including demographic-specific indicators related to the proposed project such as race, ethnicity, age, disability)

ii. community feedback

iii. geographic location, and the location's proximity to communities of color.

c. In what ways does this project aim to address or reduce the inequities you identified?


Fighting Climate Change
Impact on Greenhouse Gas Emissions:
Indicate if the project will lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions or will contribute to the County's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Identify aspects of the project that will have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions.
Increase use of renewable energy:
Identify how the project will increase the use or generation of renewable energy. For example, if solar panels are part of the plans, their inclusion will lessen the County's need for electricity from coal-fired power plants.
Increase the County's resiliency to withstand future impacts of climate change:
Identify aspects of the project that will help the County withstand future impacts of climate change, like more severe storms, flooding, and high winds.
LEED Certification:
Indicate if the project conforms to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification for Silver, Gold, or Platinum certification.

Public Hearing Feedback, Jun 10-2021

Topic	Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
	Kathy Kircher, representing Friends of Brookside Gardens	
Brookside Gardens	Kathy Kircher on behalf of Friends of Brookside Gardens Good Evening. I'm Kathy Kircher, a long-time resident of Montgomery County and current President of Friends of Brookside Gardens. I'm here representing FOBG and its 1000 members. This year, FOBG is celebrating 25 years of supporting Brookside Gardens and Parks. We invest our time and talents to raise funds to supplement public funding for and to advocate for Brookside Gardens. Many of us also volunteer in the gardens. We work with the gardeners, help with day-to-day operations, and help with educational programs and events. First, I would like to thank all of you, the MNCPPC & Montgomery Parks, for all you have done for everyone during the pandemic. The community desperately needed parks and access to the outdoors, and you came through for us. Brookside Gardens and all the parks were life savers. Thank you! Tonight, I ask you to continue funding Brookside Gardens' CIP on the current timeline. Brookside Gardens celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019. Each year more people visit, and this past year attendance was WAY up. The increased use causes more wear and tear. The 3 projects in the CIP for Brookside replace or update portions of the Garden from when it first opened 52 years ago: - a new Conservatory, - renovations to the core Formal Gardens to make them ADA compliant, - and renewal of the Rose Garden to update failing infrastructure. These are the oldest parts of the Garden. They are heavily used, have access problems, are aging, and are the least energy efficient parts of the Gardens. The conservatory needs to be replaced. It is 52-years old, shows its age, It is in the 100-year flood plain, It floods when it rains, It has	Thank you for your interest in Brookside Gardens. The Department of Parks recognizes the popularity of the gardens as a countywide destination and is well aware of the age and condition of the infrastructure. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
	damage from the 2011 earthquake. The glass roof leaks and is broken in places. The physical plant is old and inefficient. The county needs a modern structure that meets today's requirements for garden space, educational, cultural and community use, AND energy efficient technology. The Formal Garden paths are very steep, both paths and structures need repair and renewal. This summer many people still could not get there. The ADA was passed in 2008. All the spaces at Brookside Gardens should be accessible to all visitors. Please fully fund the Formal Gardens renovation. We all love the Facets of Hope Exhibit in the Rose Garden this year. But the structures and paths in this garden are deteriorating after so many years of heavy use. We ALL need Brookside Gardens. It is a valuable and unique community and regional resource. These practical and necessary projects will keep Brookside Gardens vibrant for future use. Please, fully fund these projects now. Thank you.	

Topic	Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
	Sandra Kay Taub, individual	
Brookside Nature Center	• 36-year resident of the County• Used to curate the insect zoo at Smithsonian• Connecting kids to the natural world• Volunteered at BG, was a favorite place to take her kids• Where we spent our time, living things, programs• Doing and connecting is what gets kids to understand the importance of these centers• Build their knowledge of the world and climate change• We have to start with kids and help them understand why it is so important• It is a safe place for people to go and walk, funding is critical• We created a local insect zoo at the nature center, and then Covid hit, a sweet little exhibit• Staff is fabulous and the volunteers are great	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
	Dominic Tamami & Francesca Ugolini (mother), individuals	
Need for more skate parks	• Dominic (son) o 7th grader o In Potomac or Bethesda o Skate at an actual skate park, not public places o Avoids impacts to spacese o Wont have to travel long distances o Less stress to security guards and management o Pedestrians wont have to worry about conflicts o Public transportation will be used more if in Bethesda o Safer for skaters • Francesca o Skate Park mom o Drive all over the DMV and met a lot of people o Dismay that there are no closer ones -Rockville -Olney o Significant demand in our area o Dom started a petition – has over 300 o Woodmont Triangle – owner built a ramp inside his store as well to have a place to skate o Kids are often getting kicked out of their spaces o Kids are healthy, and getting off their screens o Lots of kids of all ages are drawn on all types of wheels	Thank you for your interest in skate parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies skate parks as a priority for teen appropriate facilities. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
	Eileen Finnegan, individual	
Hillandale LP	• Hillandale• Showed slides• Thanks for renovating Hillandale NP• Completed in 22 or 23• As goes out to bid, please include o Irrigation for rectangular field o Additional park benches along the hard surface trail and nat surface o Safety audit of the access point – this current location is different from the original and is not approved by SHA, concerned about safety issues• Future Hillandale LP upgrade too o Two diamond fields o Believes there is capacity to receive it here - Showed aerial photos o People will be disappointed that Hillandale will not support o Please acquire a small part from Feds, GSA has discussed this, but Parks needs to make the request o GSA is currently advertising property for sale the PBRB o Now is the time to ask for it and short circuit the PBRB process• Want to reiterate moving this project forward• Let's get the land for these ballfields	Thank you for your interest in the Park Refresher for Hillandale Local Park. The project will be advertised for construction later this summer, which will incorporate many of the comments made, and we are hopeful of reopening the updated park in spring 2023. Parks Real Estate Team will investigate potential adjacent acquisition opportunities
	Alison Gillespie, individual	
Wheaton RP, Bike Rack Amenities, various parks	• Two items in the next cycle • Wheaton Regional Park upgrades o Been on the WRP Work Group – excited about discussions o Lots of great upgrades and improvements, but will need funding o Great example of what is in Thrive 2050 • Second: Bike Racks throughout County Parks o It is hard to find places to park bikes in such a bike-loving county, especially parks o Only 79 parks of 420+ parks have racks o Without, other paths get blocked like ADA access o Thefts affect EFA populations o All parks should have at least one rack if not several • Gerry C – supports that	Currently, the Wheaton Regional Park Improvements Capital Project (P871904) starts funding design work in FY25. However, Parks has identified several infrastructure rehabilitations, trail/wayfinding improvements, and minor new amenities that can begin implementation sooner without impacting recommendations expected in the Master Plan update. Parks expects to recommend advancing funding for known needs with the FY23-28 CIP, with the anticipation of future

Topic	Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
		PDF modifications to implement long term recommendations and proposals to reconfigure areas of the park in future CIP cycles.
	Raymond Heinsman	
Trails	• Passionate about trails• Continue supporting in the CIP• Also support the Wheaton Park Master Plan• Bikes and skate parks too!• Trails allow me and kids to travel without car• Health• Ice Cream rides – ice cream reward at end• S'M.O.R.E.s Mountain bike rides in trails• While things are going well funding wise, there is always room for improvement• Donuts without driving	Thank you for your interest in trails. Parks recognizes that trails are fundamental to overall access in addition to good park design. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Online Feedback, Open Town Hall, May 18 through June 17, 2021

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available, inside Patuxent	
Show support for conservation parks	I would like to express my interest and support for conservation parks. We must protect and increase the acres of conservation land within this county to ensure the preservation of forested lands and stream valleys. Not only is this important for environmental reasons, but it will preserve these lands for public access as our county continues to develop more and more. It might not be as flashy as an urban park, but these conservation parks are so important, and our children and grandchildren will thank us for prioritizing them so that this county can maintain its natural beauty, diverse species of flora and fauna, and provide an escape deep into the forests for visitors to hike, bike, horseback ride and meditate. The conservation parks currently within the Park portfolio provide an oasis and sanctuary from the bustle of life living so close to the nations capital. Please dedicate funding to acquiring and preserving more land intended for conservation, and leave it mostly untouched, such as the incredible gem that is Rachel Carson Conservation Park.	We continue to consider the valuable contribution of conservation parks to the overall park system and consider your input as we evaluate potential acquisitions.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Kerry Martin, inside Kensington/Wheaton	
Renovation of Stoneybrook Local Park	Please plan a renovation for Stoneybrook local park! This neighborhood (stoneybrook estates) is filled with many families with young children. The playground is not ADA accessible in any way as it's located on a rocky hill. Even a parent or a child with a mild disability would have trouble accessing the playground. The playground has graffiti on it and the equipment is not suitable for a child under 4-5 years old as it all requires good climbing skills. Example: there are no steps up to a slide, only ladders/climbing. There are no ADA accessible swings. Besides the playground at the local elementary school (Sargent Shriver), there are no other parks and playgrounds within walking distance. The nice thing about the park IS the shade of the old growth trees. But please provide what would be a huge improvement to the many home-owning families of this neighborhood.	Thank you for sharing your comments and concerns regarding Stoneybrook Local Park and the condition of the playground. We will look into the park conditions and consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Support for parks accessibility	Having the parks more accessible to people with disabilities and the older generation. Providing more areas that are wheelchair accessible, paths that a person with a visual impairment can use, benches where an older person can rest, public transportation that gets you there, and maps of the facilities that a person with low vision or blindness can use. The ones with playgrounds should have a part of the playground that is accessible to children with disabilities.	Thanks for your comments. Parks has developed a comprehensive long term Transition Plan to address the accessibility issue throughout the County park system. It is our goal to provide accessible parks and amenities within a short drive or walking distance for our County residents. The improvements include all that are mentioned in the comments such as accessible routes, playgrounds, more benches, picnic shelters, courts and fields and more. All new parks and amenities that are built in our park system will be fully accessible. Parks is also working to improve the on-line maps to make them user

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		friendly for people with low vision or blindness.
	Name not available, inside Takoma Park	
Trail Improvements, Long Branch, Sligo Creek Trail, et al.	1). Improvements to the Long Branch Trail are already under discussion, but only above Carroll Ave. This trail could be extended downstream of Carroll Ave all the way to Becca Lilley Park and then also connecting it with the Sligo Creek Trail at the Parkway. 2). Improving the "connectivity" of the trail system is important. 2a). Reopening the Georgetown Branch Trail once the Purple Line is complete would be another example. 2b). Mapping out and marking a good connection between the Sligo Creek Trail with the Georgetown Branch Trail would be important once the GBT is back open.	Parks staff concurs with this comment and is exploring opportunities to expand Long Branch Trail north and south.
	Jessy Napper, inside Kensington/Wheaton	
Park Amenities (waste management), stream protection, pollution prevention	I'd like to see more trash and recycling receptacles in park areas where many people congregate. Those receptacles should also be emptied more frequently as they often fill up quickly. I'd also like to see more control of invasive plants and management of pollinator-friendly areas. Lastly, the waterways in many of our parks are polluted with trash. We need to find ways to prevent and mitigate this trash problem so that we can encourage a more healthy ecosystem.	This comment will be forwarded to Operations staff who address trash and recycling receptacles in Parks, as well as Park Planning and Stewardship Division, the division that addresses plant/NNI management.
	Name not available	
Community Gardens	Living in Takoma Park, city of big trees, means we have no sun for vegetable gardening. I would like more community gardens in sunny spots. They don't have to be big, but it would be nice to have many of them spread out throughout the county so gardeners don't have to travel far to work in them.	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Shelley Yeutter, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Tree Plantings	Please include ample funding for the proper maintenance of trees within our parks. I live near Norwood Park and over the years and currently there trees that are large and completely dead or large trees with heavy, dead branches that are in need of removal/pruning. I worry about the safety of park patrons and children as these branches if/when they fall. Many border parking lots. It could be tragic. We are often told that the funds aren't there to better maintain the shrubbery and trees around the park. The tree budget needs to be increased so trees are safe and maintained.	Thank you for your comments regarding maintenance of trees in the park system and in Norwood Park. Park maintenance is funded by our operating budget rather than the capital budget. If you have specific concerns regarding safety and maintenance of trees on park property, please call our Customer Service Line at 301-495-2595 or e-mail us at Info@MontgomeryParks.org to report the issue so we can address it.
	Name not available, inside Patuxent	
Court Renovations (racquetball), water amenities	I regularly visit parks...can the county consider adding outdoor racquetball courts...aside from Olney courts which are poorly designed there are no outlets for racquetball players. Racquetball courts often would be used by handball players. I suspect they like myself must travel outside Montgomery County to find games. Nearest courts are at Centennial Park in Howard County or Reston, VA. Adding water amenities, pond or equivalent to parks would be welcomed. The butterfly park near Wheaton gets high marks. It is well thought out for walking and soaking up the flowers and the like. All parks need more water fountains for drinking and garage bins.	Thank you for your interest in raquetball. During the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) plan update process, we will be analyzing sports and recreational trends, including outdoor racquetball.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Community Gardens	First and foremost, do a complete revamp of the webpages and, especially, the scheduling features. Second, give out accurate information. I was trying to get a garden plot in Germantown this year. I was told there were slots open but there weren't and they were all x'd out. Third, provide more garden plots and make it easier for people who have been on waiting lists for years to get a turn. Fourth, have employees follow the rules for ever. The outdoor pool in Germantown has people working there who do not enforce the rules at all. I expect more from Montgomery County and its employees.	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Faroll Hamer, inside Takoma Park	
Pickleball Courts	Montgomery County needs dedicated pickleball courts. Pickleball is the fastest-growing sport in America, and is popular with all age and ethnic groups. Pickleballers and tennis players should not have to compete for the same courts. If you need an example, the City of Rockville has dedicated courts that are heavily used. Thank you for your thoughtful attention. Faroll Hamer, Takoma Park, Maryland	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Emily Townsend, insdie Takoma Park	
Restroom Amenities in Parks	I wish parks would have nice public restrooms that get cleaned and have water to wash my hands, rather than blue plastic port-a-potties. Particularly Nolte Park, where I sometimes play frisbee for a few hours at a time, but if all the parks had them that could improve public health (keep people from using the grass and provide for hand washing) and make the parks more usable for people with small children or smaller bladders or mobility issues that make port-a-potties hard to use. I'm aware that there are concerns about public restrooms becoming homes for homeless people or a place for crime. I'd love for us to find a solution to those problems other than no toilets and sinks. Some ideas include having human attendants and locking it when the attendant leaves, or the Portland Loo, which is self-cleaning and can be seen into (with enough privacy for using the toilet), or cameras in the common spaces, or just recognizing that homeless people and people who are committing crimes are not fundamentally a problem of the toilet and need to be addressed in other ways, just as they need to be when those things happen in other spaces.	Thank you for your interest in the provision of public restrooms, which is a challenge from both a capital and operating budget perspective. We continually work with our vendors to improve portable toilet accessibility and cleanliness, and we do provide permanent facilities where practical. Our Operations staff is experimenting with other forms of self-contained bathroom facilities, and we will continue to seek the best balance between cost and services we can moving forward.
	Wanda Cockrell, inside Aspen Hill	
Pickleball Courts	Please add more dedicated pickleball courts. There is growing need and limited availability. Often it's a shared space with tennis. Both sports have high use so having them compete for courts often means long waits. Pickleball is cross generational. Please add courts to improve accessibility.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Carolee Harvey, inside Aspen Hill	
Pickleball Courts	MC needs more dedicated Pickleball courts. It's a game for all ages - 20 year olds play with 80 year olds. In the two years I've played, I've seen it go from one or two courts being used regularly to all eight of the courts. I rarely see tennis players. Please consider more dedicated courts. Thank you. Carolee Harvey	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Shelagh Hodson, inside Aspen Hill	
Pickleball Courts	Please consider dedicated Pickleball courts for the fastest growing sport in America. All ages can play, learn and enjoy! Shelagh Hodson	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available, inside Silver Spring	
Pickleball Courts	Please add dedicated pickleball courts (or at least more pickleball-lined tennis courts) to the downtown Silver Spring/Takoma Park area. We lack this amenity and I often must travel to the north and west of the the county to find pickleball courts that are often crowded.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available, inside Silver Spring	
Restoration of Sligo Creek Watershed	I request consideration for a phased program to restore the Sligo Creek watershed to a more natural state. In particular, I recall at Evans Parkway Park that concrete slabs that were used to control Sligo Creek were removed and replaced with rocks and native plants. It is lovely. However, when you look up and down past Evans Parkway Park it is all concrete slabs again to channel the Creek. It would be awesome if the County would create a phased program to restore the entire Creek to its natural beauty like you did at Evans Parkway Park and get rid of all of that terrible concrete. Thanks for your consideration!	Thank you for your interest in restoring Sligo Creek. Parks staff concurs with this comment and is always exploring opportunities to remove concrete channels wherever feasible, including within the Sligo Creek watershed. To support efforts to remove concrete channels outside of Parkland limits, please contact the County Departments of Environmental Protection and Transportation.
	Name not available, inside Olney	
Pickleball Courts	Please add dedicated pickleball courts (or at least more pickleball-lined tennis courts) to as many parks as possible. This is a fast growing sport that is great exercise. This sport is good for all ages and is quick to learn. Exercise should be encouraged and this is a fun way to get it.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Pickleball courts! Would love to see more dedicated courts (and, if that is not possible, pickleball lines on tennis courts). This sport is increasing in popularity nationwide and in this area. It is inexpensive for people to play -if a Park court is available all they need is a paddle and a ball. It can be played simply for fun and exercise but also at competitive levels so it appeals to a variety of people. Thank you, Montgomery Parks staff!	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts, Restroom Amenities	I have been playing pickleball for six years and have seen explosive growth in the number of players who show up in the parks to play. We need dedicated courts to keep up with the growing demand for play. The temporary nets required now are expensive and cumbersome. Sharing courts with tennis players can be problematic. In addition portable toilets are needed for these sites. There can be 20-30 people at a site that has no bathrooms. Thank you for your consideration. Doug Giauque	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities, and we will share your interest in adding portable toilets with our Operations staff.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Please please please make sure that there are sufficient pickleball courts!It's. a great sport — for all ages. It's been around for years in other parts of the US, and now it's becoming wildly popular here in Montgomery County. The county-sponsored clinics have waiting lists!	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Every tennis court needs to be lined with pickleball lines! Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country and there's a shortage of courts -especially in the southeastern part of Montgomery County! I belong to 3 groups of PB players and everyone complains of the lack of options. PB Lines on all tennis courts should be easy and relatively inexpensive return on money. Ideally I'd also like to see more dedicated PB courts in southern section of Montgomery Co!	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Jane Wilber, inside Patuxent	
Pickleball Courts	PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE add dedicated pickleball courts. So many new players are taking up the sport every month. It has grown exponentially. We are desperate for more venues.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Mary Beth Hatem, inside Takoma Park	
Pickleball Courts	Pickleball courts are much needed and should be a high priority. Demand is great and continues to grow. Easier to learn and to play than tennis or virtually any of the many sports supported by the County, pickleball is ideal for recreation and for fitness. Montgomery County lags far behind the rest of the country, particularly in the densely populated area of Takoma Park/close-in Silver Spring.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Nancy Chu, inside White Oak	
Pickleball Courts	Please consider lining as many MoCo outdoor tennis courts with overlay pickleball lines as you can. Please make some tennis courts into dedicated pickleball courts. Pickleball was popular pre-Pandemic, and new players still joined the sport during the Pandemic. Pickleball refuses to stop growing as a sport for all age groups.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Bill Coffin, inside White Oak	
Pickleball Courts	Please build more dedicated pickleball courts in the county. The growth has been exponential this year. We need all tennis courts lined for PB and a real initiative to build dedicated courts. Build em and people will come. Thanks for your consideration	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Pickleball is rapidly become popular with all ages but especially with seniors. More dedicated courts are needed in the county including the southeast corner. Pickleball can be played even in winter and provides exercise and social opportunities for all ages. Please consider adding more courts.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Please add dedicated pickleball courts in eastern Montgomery. Residents in the area have way too few courts to meet rising demand, especially among seniors.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available, inside Takoma Park / Four Corners	
Pickleball Courts	The main thing I would like to see in Montgomery Parks is more pickle ball courts - whether brand new courts where none currently exist, or drawing lines on existing tennis courts and giving users easy access to pickle ball nets. Just like with tennis nets, pickle ball nets should be available. Possibly dedicate half of a currently existing tennis court and create individual pickle ball courts with nets already in place if a completely new court cannot be built. The tennis court next to Blair H.S. is a perfect example.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Abigail Rome, inside Silver Spring	
Pickleball Courts	I would like to see more dedicated pickle ball courts in the southern half of Montgomery County. The sport is growing rapidly - exponentially, even! - and we are finding it difficult to find places to play. These courts should be lined for pickle ball and include nets to encourage more people to get outside, get exercise, build community and have fun. Thanks for listening.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Pam Dent	
Pickleball Courts	I would love to see more pickle ball courts in the county, especially as it's becoming more and more popular. It would be great if there were some courts with lines painted exclusively for pickleball. Please consider painting pickleball lines on the courts on Forest Glen Rd next to Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center. Thank you for your consideration! Pam Dent	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	There is a dearth of outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. Most courts are shared with other sports (e.g., tennis). Also, nets are not typically provided, or some use tennis nets, which are not regulation for pickleball. Considering the large community of pickleball players in the county, the lack of facilities is just plain negect. There needs to be dedicated pickleball courts at more locations throughout the county.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Pickleball is a growing multi-generational sport that can be played outdoors in the DMV area year-round. Please consider adding pickleball lines to existing tennis courts AND adding dedicated pickleball courts in some parks. To my knowledge, Bethesda does not have any public pickleball-lined courts. Thank you.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	I'm an avid pickleball player and I humbly request that all tennis county courts be lined for both sports. The pickleball community is large and growing. It's been an amazing source of exercise and camaraderie.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Playing pickleball on the outdoor public courts in Montgomery County has been my salvation during this past year during the COVID lockdown. Its America's fastest growing sport because its easy to learn and addictively fun while providing exercise and camaraderie outdoors for people of all ages. In collaboration with Montgomery County Schools and the municipalities, expanding access to public pickleball courts should be relatively easy compared to developing other sport facilities. Please consider the following to increase the number of public courts where appropriate to reduce noise conflicts with residential neighbors: 1)Installing pickleball overlays or converting courts to dedicated pickleball courts when existing tennis courts require resurfacing or pavement rebuilds; 2)Including pickleball courts in new park or park redevelopment plans; and 3)Expediting and fully funding recommendations in the existing Pickleball Study by Montgomery Parks. Thank you for your consideration.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	The activity with the highest growth rate in the county and the country is pickleball. As such, the parks plan should take it into account. The greatest advantage is that, per square footage, it serves the recreational needs of a higher number of people than tennis since you can fit at very low cost three pickleball courts in one tennis court. The senior population tends to use the courts in the morning, while the school/work population uses them more in the evening, and they are used mostly year-round, with the few exceptions of rain, snow or temperatures under 35Â º or40Â º. The health gains for the senior crowd are obvious. Any observer can see how many seniors play by visiting any public courts.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Karoline Anders, inside Clarksburg	
Black Hill RP SEED Classroom	More and more we are learning that experiencing Nature is restorative to humans and helps us physically and psychologically. During this past year with the pandemic, I noticed that our parks were used more than ever. Clearly, our parks are vital to a vibrant, health community. First and foremost, we need more parks and we need to expand the ones we have (because the parks we have are getting very crowded...). In terms of specific projects , I urge the planning board to support the SEED classroom at Black Hill Park. This classroom will benefit the community by providing a sustainable, private space for their nature preschool and school field experiences. Also at Black Hill, they are working to remove the current railing around the center's deck to improve access to the viewshed of the lake, mediate safety concerns with the current railing, and to comply with ADA requirements. I urge the board to include the railing project in the budget. .	Thanks for your support to our project. The SEED Classroom project is currently funded. We are now working to hire a consultant to design and build the project with the hope of opening in spring 2023.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Need of more pickleball courts in the county. The sport is becoming extremely popular and there's not enough designated courts to play. In addition, I understand they are lining more tennis courts with pickleball lines. This is great but it require players to bring their own net - which can be costly. We don't ask tennis players to bring/carry their own nets to play - why does it have to be different for pickleball players? The county is doing a great job supporting the sport and adding more lessons & leagues. But unfortunately we don't have enough space and courts to support that. The cost and maintenance of the courts is minimal and I think the return is great. Please consider adding more pickleball courts.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Need for more skate parks	Skatepark is needed !!! Safer side walks , less likely for cars to crash into skaters , and a good environment !	Thank you for your interest in skate parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifiesskate parks as a priority for teen appropriate facilities. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Inmar Campos, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Need for more skate parks	I feel like there should be skatepark in Bethesda. Why because there is a lot of skaters here and we Would all love a skatepark that's good smooth and secure we hate being kicked out of spots because of security and we also know that we're damaging property so if this skatepark were to be built there would be a lot of people including me maintaining it and cleaning it	Thank you for your interest in skate parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies skate parks as a priority for teen appropriate facilities. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Stacey Band, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Re: Norwood Local Park Improvement Requests Norwood Local Park Facilities Improvement and maintenance of the current facilities need to be evaluated and discussed, prior to any new or additional components are added. I would be happy to participate in efforts to review the needs and concerns that exist on the Norwood Park property. - Park Activity Building: o interior improvements to the floor on the main level, o evaluate tables and chairs and consider replacing, o review white board â€“ location and safety, and determine if need to be remounted. o It is my understanding that the upper level and lower level remained"untouched"• from many many years ago. Is there any plan or intention to update these spaces? o On the back side of the building, the metal railing along the staircase going to the second floor is split, rusted, and hazardous. o Part of the retention walls on the back side of the building are severely cracked and in need of evaluation and repair. - Relocate, update, and replace the toddler playground o The current playground is outdated, many of the materials are metal and concrete, some of the metal fixtures rusted o The current flooring has some â€œcut-outsâ€• and uneven spots that create hazards o Move the playground, so that it is not 50 feet from the Dog Park and the walkway to the Dog Park. Muddiness, Standing Water Issues, and Unsanitary Conditions - Neighbors are increasingly concerned about water-related issues at Norwood Local Park. After a "good" rain, there is usually standing water in numerous places, including on the blacktop trail near the Toddler/Tot Park. At times, the flooding is so bad that areas of the park are unusable and flooding occurs on nearby streets that sit at a lower elevation; such as Chevy Chase Drive and Offutt, and Chevy Chase Drive heading towards Bradley, as well.	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and comments regarding various desired improvements. Parks is in concept design for improvements to the Park Activity Building, including exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and making the building more accessible. With respect to the playground, they are inspected monthly by certified playground safety inspectors and safety issues are corrected as they are noted. The lower playground was renovated in 2007 with contributions from the Friends of Norwood Park, and it is in much better condition than many playgrounds in our park system, so it is not currently scheduled for replacement. The upcoming dog park project will include stormwater management facilities to address drainage and runoff from the work associated with the project.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	- To construct the proposed dog park at Norwood, there will likely need to be some land leveling and or raising; which could negatively impact the already existing water and drainage-based issue; thus, leading to additional standing water and more extremely muddy areas, creating additional unusable spaces and water-related problems for the surrounding areas. - During one of the community meetings with County officials, it was shared that no water-management-based issues would be addressed through this project, if not directly related to the construction of the physical dog park. - These issues need to be thoroughly evaluated and addressed, in an effort to reduce health and safety-based issues regarding dog excrements, reduce exacerbation of storm-water related issues, and to ensure accessibility of park property following rain. Other Norwood Local Park Improvements Needed - The old (and abandoned) community center next to the Co-Op Preschool remains on the proper, in disrepair. What plans and or intentions exist for this facility? - The additional of additional new trees on the Norwood park property bordering the apartment buildings to help buffer noise from the park. There are residents at 4800 Chevy Chase Drive that would be interested in participating in this type of conversation. Many thanks for your time and commitment to Parks.	

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Need for more skate parks	I believe there should be a skatepark in Bethesda because, 1-People are more then tired of seeing skateboarders and hearing all the loud noises and being disturbed by them 2-Skateboards get kicked out and yelled at and despised by almost everyone in Bethesda because we have nowhere else to skate 3-Skateboarders need a place to go where they wont be able to disturb nor be disturbed while they skate 4-The closest skateparks near Bethesda are at Rockville and Kensington and other parks are far away to go to such as RFK skatepark or Olney skatepark 5-Skateboarders just want to have as much fun as possible especially the young ones who don't want anything else but to have fun in their life. Those are 5 reasons why i believe Bethesda should have a skatepark.	Thank you for your interest in skate parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies skate parks as a priority for teen appropriate facilities. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Need for more skate parks	Make a skate/scooter/bike facility for all the youngsters in Bethesda, many people are bothered by the loud and distractive manor of these sports. It would also keep property owners at ease knowing they don't need to deal with people using there property for skateboarding. Thank you, Weston	Thank you for your interest in skate parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies skate parks as a priority for teen appropriate facilities. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available, inside White Oak	
Northwest Branch Trail	1) It would be nice to have a small footbridge across the NW Branch trail somewhere Between 29 (Colesville road) and New Hampshire. I live in Hillandale and would love for the trail to be a loop over to the Woodmoor side trail. 2) a means for crossing 29 near where it intersects with the NW branch (pedestrian bridge) so that people enjoying the trail don't have to cross a heavily trafficked road on foot. 3) a means to access the rhode island trolley trail in hyattsville from the NE branch trail. Currently not a great way to connect without crossing many roads .	The Trails Team will continue to explore possibilities for bridge crossings of Northwest Branch. A bridge over Route 29 was not included in the recommendations of MCDOT's 29 Mobility & Reliability Study (Appendix III), though the

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		addition of a pedestrian island was recommended. Montgomery Parks is generally supportive of improving this crossing. The Northeast Branch Trail is located in Prince George's County and outside the jurisdiction of Montgomery Parks and Planning. We have passed along the comment to Prince George's Parks and Recreation trails staff.
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Pickleball is becoming a very popular sport in Montgomery County. There are several tennis courts that always go unused and can be converted to pickleball courts. It would be great to see a conversion of not so popular/not heavily used tennis courts to pickleball courts.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Ernest Monti, inside Silver Spring	
Pickleball Courts	Please add more pickleball courts in Montgomery county both outdoors and indoors. As you well know this is a fast-growing sport and will attract more people to use the Montgomery county facilities.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays,

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Community Gardens	more community gardens! People can grow food to feed themselves and their communities. Lots of opportunities for walking paths--the roads closed to traffic on weekends during COVID has been wonderful	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Robert Valdillez, inside Gaithersburg Vicinity	
Pickleball Courts	Montgomery County needs more dedicated pickleball courts. This county is very behind in the amount of courts compared to other areas I have lived. More pickleball courts will definitely attract more people to use the parks.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available, inside Damascus	
Trails, Damascus RP, Damascus region parks, general	1. Park Improvements - Damascus Recreational Park, Kings Valley, Damascus - Develop a natural surface woodland walking/hiking (no biking) nature trail through the wooded portion of the parkland. This would complement the existing paved park walking/hiking/bicycle pathway. 2. Park Amenities - John Haines Neighborhood Park, Damascus - Improve parking strip at park entry at Greensboro Drive adjacent basketball court, with paving or crushed gravel, to bring it up to road level. The current parking strip is badly eroded and below road level and was not improved during paving of Greensboro drive several years ago. 3. New Park Acquisition and Development - Central Damascus, MD, has no major park land in or adjacent the town center. Acreage is available now adjacent Woodfield Road Extended, north of the Damascus Library and across from the Safeway shopping center. Idea area for a Damascus Town Center MoCo public park site and development. 4. Thank you for listening and your service in providing MoCo residents with excellent parks and recreation facilities. Well done.	Item 1. Thank you for your comments. The Trails Team will look into natural surface trails in this park. Item 2: Thank you for your comments. The engineering team will investigate the paving condition at John Haines Neighborhood Park. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities. Item 3: Thank you for your comments. The real estate team will investigate the Damascus area for potential acqusition.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
North Four Corners Local Park	The Northwood Four Corners Civic Association (NFCCA) would like to file this comment and request for funding consideration under the Montgomery Parks spending plan for the future of parks as part of its six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) plan for capital projects. NFCCA appreciates the substantial investment made to revitalize the North Four Corners Local park several years ago. The soccer field is popular as is the surrounding walking path. The playground is heavily used by families with young children. Unfortunately, the recreation center was decommissioned as a space available to the public--instead that facility was leased to a private school. NFCCA believes that installing an open-air facility that can be used as a community gathering space would benefit a broader range of users. A gathering spot, such as a concert shell/stage, a gazebo, or fire pit in the field near where the playground equipment is located would expand the usage and popularity of this park for users of all ages. At a minimum, outdoor electrical should be installed to support using the park for movie nights, concerts, etc. There is currently water access. In addition, NFCCA requests funding to install additional signage regarding the law to leash dogs at the multiple entrances to the Northwest Branch trails and perhaps throughout the trail system to reinforce the message for dog owners who allow their dogs to roam.	Thank you for your interest in North Four Corners Local Park. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Len Davidson, inside Aspen Hill	
Pickleball Courts	More pickleball courts with lights! I am part of a group of 50+ players who are playing several times a week, and we struggle to find enough places to play that have lights for evening play. We really like New Port mill, but nobody in the county seems to know how to get the lights there turned on	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Norwood LP Improvements	These comments concern Norwood Park, which I live adjacent to at 4720 Chevy Chase Dr. Since the dog park is being built, there should be a maintenance plan in place, as well as support for the increase in individuals in the park in terms of trash removal support. Additional parking is necessary, but I would like this to be provided without cutting down, for example, the trees in the circle. The parcel between Bradley Blvd and Chevy Chase Drive will likely be developed, and . I would like to see a public parking facility at this location. The facility building in the park needs to be renovated. The former 50+ Senior Employment Center should be renovated to provide a facility for an appropriate group - social services, library branch, etc. For the dog park and facilities being renovated or developed in the park, the use of green building materials and techniques should be considered. I live on Chevy Chase Dr and as I enter the park after a rain, there is standing water everywhere. After the playground near the tennis court was added, there was no attempt to replant the grass or otherwise mediate potential erosion. Over many years, this area has experienced a tremendous amount of erosion that is visible through Google Maps. Throughout the park, a comprehensive plan needs to be in place to deal with water, erosion ,etc. The plan to build 4702 Chevy Chase Drive includes removal of trees behind the 4720 Condo Project, and the construction of a handicap accessible entry to the park. This is a necessary buffer for our building and for other buildings in our neighborhood and contains a lot of wildlife. We have been told not to worry -that the country will plant a tree every 40 feet. At the moment, we have a wall of green behind us and I would like to see this preserved. There needs to be more entries to the park from Chevy Chase Drive that would be safe for all the residents that border the park to the North of Norwood Park, including the buildings on Chevy Chase Drive, and any additional buildings that may be built on the parcel between Chevy Chase and Norwood. There needs to be at least one or two handicapper accessible paths from Chevy Chase Dr to the park. 4702	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and comments regarding various desired improvements. Parks is in concept design for improvements the Park Activity Building, including exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and making the building more accessible. With respect to the playground, they are inspected monthly by certified playground safety inspectors and safety issues are corrected as they are noted. The upcoming dog park project will include stormwater management facilities to address drainage and runoff from the work associated with the project. Parks is in concept design to rehabilitate and expand the parking area in a balanced way that protects large trees, is respectful of the historic building setting, and improves accessibility. Thank you for your comments regarding maintenance of Norwood Park and ideas for additional future improvements. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Chevy Chase Drive should have a cut through to the park for non-residents of the building. The main playground was originally supposed to be handicapped accessible, but is not. Ramps should be designed to enter the playground from the parking area. Thought should be given to adding an area where disabled people of all ages can work out and build strength. There needs to be signage that dogs are not supposed to be off lease and enforcement of violations. A community garden would be great, especially for individuals with lower incomes to enjoy planting and fresh fruits and vegetables. This area could be surrounded by trees that produce fruit that the county could plant. There needs to be handicapped accessible points to easily get into the park from the parking areas.	
	Name not available, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Norwood Local Park Facilities Park Activity Building: o Interior improvements to the floor on the main level needed, o Evaluate tables and chairs and consider replacing, o The upper level and lower level remained â€œuntouchedâ€• from many many years ago. Is there any plan or intention to update these spaces? o On the back side of the building, the metal railing along the staircase going to the second floor is split, rusted, and hazardous. o Part of the retention walls on the back side of the building are severely cracked and in need of evaluation and repair. Muddiness, Standing Water Issues, and Unsanitary Conditions in Norwood Park: o there is still standing water in Norwood Park after a rain. Camera scoping and video is needed throughout the park o To construct the proposed dog park at Norwood, there will likely need to be some land leveling and or raising; which could negatively impact the already existing water and drainage-based issue; thus, leading to additional standing water and more extremely muddy areas, creating additional unusable spaces and water-related problems for the surrounding areas. During one of the community meetings with County officials, it was shared that no water-	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and comments regarding various desired improvements. Parks is in concept design for improvements the Park Activity Building, including exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and making the building more accessible. We will consider your comments as we develop this design. The upcoming dog park project will include stormwater management facilities to address drainage and runoff from the work associated with the project.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	management-based issues would be addressed through this project, if not directly related to the construction of the physical dog park. This needs to be addressed!!! o These issues need to be thoroughly evaluated and addressed, in an effort to reduce health and safety-based issues regarding dog excrements, reduce exacerbation of storm-water related issues, and to ensure accessibility of park property following rain.	
	Suzanne Nash, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Park Lighting	Lighting should comply with the Dark Sky Association recommendations. Warm LED (no more than 3000 Kelvins, shields, only on when needed). Older buildings with energy-leaking door, windows, roofs, etc. should be modernized including energy efficient HVAC's). It's frustrating to see the buildings in such disrepair and knowing how much it contributes to wasted energy use and climate change).	Thank you for your interest in dark skies and energy conservation. Parks actively works to improve energy efficiency as we rehabilitate our existing buildings and is an active participant in the county-wide Climate Action Plan.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Maria Pedak-Kari, inside Damascus	
lack Hill Regional Park, Damascus region parks, general, amenities, tree maintenance	First, thank you for our parks! Our wonderful green space is one reason I have stayed in MC. and it is one of the County services that I brag about to friends in other jurisdictions. Here is my wishlist for your work in the year(s) ahead: First, please support the Black Hill Regional Park CIP request. The work the park does with children of all ages is critical to raising the next generation of environmentally savvy citizens. And the park has reached out to our new American residents too. Second, please acquire the available land in Damascus and develop it into a community park. The Damascus population has grown and new families with young children are moving in. Please seize the moment to acquire land along Woodfield Road. Third and this applies to all our parks and tree space. please, please increase the budget for tree maintenance and care. This means hiring more arborists. Our roadside trees are in bad shape and in my hikes I see many dead trees. Last, but not least, create and fund a large-scale park and stream cleanup along with a recycling program. Perhaps, grant funding could be sought for this. I hike Little Bennett and Black Hill parks regularly., I bring family to events like the Monarch Festival. Just this weekend I joined friends to celebrate a birthday at BH and we ended with kayaking. Our parks and your job in protecting and developing them are critical to the Montgomery County quality of life. Take care and thank you.	Thank you for your interest and support to our parks. Parks is actively working on improvements to the picnic area, including shelter improvements, ADA accessibility improvements. Parks is also actively working to design and build a SEED Classroom facility within Black Hill Regional Park. The real estate team will investigate the Damascus area for potential acquisition.
	Name not available	
Norwood LP Improvements	Norwood Park: Restore the abandoned former senior hiring center building between the pre-k building and the tennis courts.	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park. While we don't have immediate plans to renovate the veterans building, it is in our work program to improve the Park Activity Building, including exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and making the building more accessible. The work includes exterior wall repair, roof

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		repair, interior upgrades and renovation to comply with current code requirements, as well as improving accessibility to and within the building.
	Barbara Fredericks, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Tennis courts in Norwood Local Park need to be resurfaced and the area around the tennis courts and between the courts and the playgrounds needs to be regraded to prevent flooding and the turf needs to be restored. Tennis courts have not been resurfaced or repaired for over 20 years and are heavily used.	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park. Tennis courts throughout the county are regularly inspected and reviewed for maintenance and renovation.
	Bernard Fagan, inside Kemp Mill/4 Corners	
Pickleball Courts	Over the last few years I have discovered that Pickleball is a wonderful means of getting exercise, meeting new people, and developing skills in what is truly a "lifetime sport." I'm 75 years old and have had occasion to play with people ages 12 to 88. Although Pickleball shares some obvious similarities with tennis, many people with mobility issues (e.g., bad hips and knees, or obesity) who cannot play tennis CAN find a niche for themselves on a Pickleball court. This has contributed to the explosive growth of Pickleball across the country. And Pickleball courts require much less space than what tennis courts require, which means that taxpayer money invested in Pickleball courts produces a much greater return on investment. I live in "down county" Silver Spring and urge the county to create more dedicated Pickleball courts that would be easily accessible to people in this area.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities. In addition, in 2021 Montgomery County Public Schools is scheduled to add pickleball courts to existing tennis courts at select middle schools, including Takoma Park MS and Sligo MS.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Norwood Park does not need any new amenities. What it needs is maintenance - trash removal, port-o-potty cleaning, working water fountains. The Parks Department and Planning Board have already disregarded and disrespected community input regarding the dog park. Please leave the many park users and the influx of new users (with new affordable housing just approved for the northern border) with room to play. You ask for our input - LISTEN TO IT.	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park. We will share your comments regarding maintenance with Operations staff.
	Name not available	
Norwood LP Improvements	Norwood Park would be improved by having a cafe and ice cream store. Also, the park would be improved by having flowering gardens, such as rhododendrons and azaleas.	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park. While we don't have plans to incorporate concessions within the park, we do expect to include plantings as part of the upcoming dog park project.
	John Sullivan, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Ice Skating Facilities	I'm John Sullivan, the president of The Potomac Speedskating Club. We are an elite speedskating club that has won the national title four years in a row, and have produced top Olympians, including Thomas Hong and Simon Cho, both from Laurel, MD. This year we we likely place two kids on the team including Maame Biney, the first African American woman to qualify for a U.S. Olympic Speedskating Team. We skate almost exclusively at Montgomery County ice rinks. We've loved working with the staff, who are always helpful and supportive, but are limited by what the facilities can offer. We'd like to see a rink in Germantown that can support our club with safer facilities, and Olympic sized rink that can also host events, like the national championships, which we have to host in Prince William County. We will obtain an official U.S. Speedskating designation and even raise money for the rink.	The master plan for the Ridge Road Recreational Park included an ice-skating facility. The current feasibility study will be updated in FY25. Once completed, reviewed, and determined to be feasible, the project will move into the design phase and then to construction.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Community Gardens	Create a community garden, with a teaching program for kids year round, kicking it up to high gear in the summer. Use the fruit & veg from the program to donate to the community food banks. Students can earn SSL hours.	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Lori Bowes, inside Takoma Park	
Invasive species in parks	I'd like to see more investment in control of invasive species in parks. I live in Takoma Park near Sligo and I honestly get depressed when I walk in the parks because there is no understory save for invasives, We do volunteer with invasives with FOSC but there needs to be more support from the county. Invasives also regularly bring down mature trees. It is a difficult problem but I know of other park systems that seem to invest more in managing invasives.	This comment will be forwarded to the Park Planning and Stewardship Division, the division that addresses plant/NNI management.
	Name not available	
ADA accessibility	Please provide more wheelchair accessible playgrounds, open spaces, trails, and access to our community parks.	Thanks for your comments. Parks has developed a long term yet rigorous Transition Plan to address accessibility issues throughout the County park system. It is our goal to provide accessible parks and amenities for our County residents. The improvements include all that are mentioned in the comments such as accessible routes, playgrounds, trails, picnic shelters, courts, and fields and more. Any new parks and amenities that are built in our

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		park system will be fully accessible.
	M Holohan, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Norwood Local Park is very heavily used in every season of the year, and the surrounding area is becoming more and more population dense, leading to more usage of the Park. We need major investments to have safe, shaded, dry areas to recreate and relax in. Ideas for improvements that would make a significant difference: 1. Permanent Bathrooms, not portables that create a horrible stench, esp. in summer 2. Water fountain that works 3. Historic Park Activity Building needs to be renovated. Interior improvements to the floor on the main level, tables and chairs, and repairs including the crumbling retention wall and rusted metal railing. 4. Tot Lot/Lower Playground: the current playground is outdated, the surface is rutted and damaged, and some of the metal play fixtures are rusted. Other features have been removed and never replaced. 5. Water management/Flooding and Standing Water. This is a major problem for park users and neighbors. Even after just a moderate rain, there is standing water in numerous places in Norwood Park, including a wide area north of the tennis courts and nursery school and on the blacktop trail near the Toddler/Tot Park. The ground stays very boggy and wet for days and makes many of the unprogrammed areas unusable. Mosquitoes are attracted and breed in the standing water. At times, the water runoff is so bad that it extends from the park to nearby homes/basements on Chevy Chase Drive and Hillandale Rd. The water runoff issues need to be thoroughly studied and addressed, especially because the planned dog park will affect water runoff issues negatively with its non-grass surfaces, and will add a concentrated area of dog urine/waste right next to the Tot Lot. 6. The old, vacant community center building next to the Co-Op Preschool should be demolished. It has been abandoned and not maintained for more than 10 years. That would be a	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and comments regarding various desired improvements. Parks is in concept design for improvements the Park Activity Building, including exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and making the building more accessible. With respect to the playground, they are inspected monthly by certified playground safety inspectors and safety issues are corrected as they are noted. The upcoming dog park project will include stormwater management facilities to address drainage and runoff from the work associated with the project. Parks is in concept design to rehabilitate and expand the parking area in a balanced way that protects large trees, is respectful of the historic building setting, and improves accessibility. Thank you for your comments regarding maintenance of Norwood Park and ideas for additional future improvements. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	great spot for permanent restrooms. 7. Add trees to provide shade and pollution and noise abatement. 8. Parking that is designed to be safer for pedestrians, pets, and other cars. Parking spaces need to be adequate size.	
	Name not available, inside Kensington/Wheaton	
Dog Parks, Amenities	More trash cans around the trails. More picnic tables in the open areas around the park. A much bigger dog park maybe with grass or woods. Could fence in part of a wooded area for a great dog park.	Thank you for your interest in dog parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies dog parks as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Liam Zalubas, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Idea for Improvement- Use Data and Analysis to support Parks decisions and value community input even when the Parks Dept has a different view. No Dog Parks should be built without REAL analysis and a fair, objective process. Overall, the Parks Department should *not* be spending $500,000+ (or any amount) on each dog park without doing real studies of usage of the park and specific locations in the park, and fairly evaluating what impact a dog park would have on park users and the environment (positive and negative). Recently, the Parks Department recommended a dog park at Norwood Local Park without doing any study of current park usage. There was no data. Instead, they did "site visits" during the most shut-down times of the pandemic. Additionally, they used misleading statistics, did not include pertinent information to the community, and ignored community input at each stage of a supposedly open process. The Parks Department seemed to have a predetermined outcome. Shameful, especially when the Parks department ignored their own safety criteria, and placed the dogs next to a playground for 2-5 year olds in the center of the park's open space. They also ignored the long-standing and significant issues of	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park. The upcoming dog park project will include stormwater management facilities to address drainage and runoff from the work associated with the project.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	storm water management in Norwood Park and inadequate parking, both of which will be negatively affected by a large non-turf dog park. The Parks Department's process for the placement of a dog park at Norwood Local Park is a study of what not to do as an agency of public trust. This is relevant as we contribute responses to the Parks Capital Improvements 5-year plan. The process matters. Budget for collecting usage data so that the Parks Dept has better information. Advocate for analysis over opinion, and for community needs and preferences to be heard in a real way.	
	Name not available	
Norwood LP Improvements	I am concerned that the dog park in Norwood park will displace the people who use it to meet people, picnic, and enjoy the park.	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and your comments on the dog park project.
	Joan Barron, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Norwood Park- I would like to see some more drainage issues addressed specifically by the entrances to the tennis courts and north of the tot park. It would also be great to have a shelter area somewhere (that is not in the planned dog park). The building which was once a Senior Services center is an eyesore. My understanding is that the electrical for the preschool is located there. It would be nice if that was straightened out and maybe have that building demolished or repurposed. The path that runs along the large playground stops at the parking lot. Perhaps something could be done to extend that path so that folks are not walking through the parking lot to continue down through the park. NO black top please. The tot park should be updated as some of the equipment is not suitable for little ones and the surface needs replacement or repair. The periphery of the park could have more trees and shrubs for drainage(that word again), aesthetics and privacy for the town homes. Little Falls Trail, adjacent to Norwood , also has drainage issues and the path could be replaced with ideally a pervious surface which may mitigate the drainage issues?! thank you	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and for improvements to the park. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	Make sure every park and community recreation center with tennis courts has at least one designated pickleball court. Can be a tennis court with pickleball lines in a lighter shade painted on so as not to interfere with the tennis court lines.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Public spaces for teen girls	More places where teen girls can while hanging out and feel safe. See this article for ideas and suggestions. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-05-28/we-need-more-public-space-for-teen-girls	Parks acknowledge that teenagers, especially teen girls are underrepresented stakeholders. During the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) plan process, staff will analyze underrepresented demographic in parks. Based on the outcome, Parks will create strategies on placemaking recommendation which can be considered future park facility planning.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Pickleball Courts	We need more outdoor pickleball courts in the Takoma Park/Silver Spring area! There are an number of tennis courts that could be striped, but plans for striping seem mainly to benefit north-county residents (with the lone exception of Silver spring intermediate), who already have many public options!	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities. In addition, in 2021 Montgomery County Public Schools is scheduled to add pickleball courts to existing tennis courts at select middle schools, including Takoma Park MS and Sligo MS.
	Name not available	
Norwood LP Improvements	In Norwood Local Park, please address the dilapidated buildings in the park, including the interior of the historic park activity building, which is in poor shape, and the abandoned building next to the nursery school. Please communicate plans for these structures with the surrounding neighborhoods.	While we don't have immediate plans to renovate the veterans building, it is in our work program to improve the current Park Activity Building. The improvement includes exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and renovation to comply with current code requirements, as well as making the building ADA accessible.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Alison Gillespie, inside Kensington/Wheaton	
Wheaton RP, Bike Rack Amenities, various parks	I would like to suggest two things. First I would like to suggest that Parks invest in bike racks for all its parks. I have been working with a team of advocates, council staffers, planners and parks department employees to assess where bike racks are lacking at public facilities. We asked for some data on this, and we discovered that only 79 out of 422 parks in Montgomery Parks' system have adequate bike racks for securing a bike. We also realized that the county's planning team has assembled a fantastic guide to bike rack standards. Some racks are so poorly designed that they are not worth buying, and yet they are often purchased because they are the cheapest option. The standards guide, which can be found here: https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Bicycle-Parking-Guidelines-Final.pdf would ensure that any bike racks purchased in the future by the park system would be truly useful and a good investment. We also discovered that one of the biggest costs associated with installing bike racks is the concrete pad that is often needed in a park to create the secure base for a new rack. There are two work arounds to this. First, any park being refurbished, renovated or refreshed will be scheduled for concrete work, and we could ask the Parks department to always include a pad for a bike rack be included in every kind of renovation involving concrete. The other way to save money on the need for a concrete base for bike racks would involve giving over a single parking space meant for cars to a bike corral or bike rack. This would enable a large number of bikes to park in an existing single car space. Bike racks are important for encouraging people to get exercise, avoid using their car to go to the park, and provide bike riders with dignity and respect. They can deter theft and thereby increase safety in parks. They also help to avoid ADA conflicts; often bikes get chained to railings intended to help those who need assistance on ramps. Sometimes a bike chained to a sign post can block pedestrian access. I would love to see Montgomery Parks make a plan to fund bike racks over the course of the 2023-2028 budget years. Thanks for considering this proposal. I would also like to request Please fund improvements for Wheaton Regional Park. I know that the park's master plan is being revised and will be	Thanks for your support on bike rack amenities. The Department recognizes that bicycle access is fundamental to overall access in addition to the good park design. Current Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan will cover the park access matter as countywide. Currently, the Wheaton Regional Park Improvements Capital Project (P871904) starts funding design work in FY25. However, Parks has identified several infrastructure rehabilitations, trail/wayfinding improvements, and minor new amenities that can begin implementation sooner without impacting recommendations expected in the Master Plan update. Parks expects to recommend advancing funding for known needs with the FY23-28 CIP, with the anticipation of future PDF modifications to implement long term recommendations and proposals to reconfigure areas of the park in future CIP cycles.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	completed soon. I have participated in meetings and seen a few of the ideas that are being discussed and I'm very excited about what I've seen so far. The park sorely needs to be upgraded, integrated into the community more and hopefully will include a lot more bike access, pedestrian access and lots of great new ways for people to get active in parks. This park could be a really great economic generator for this community if it was improved. It is loved, but it needs refurbishment and that will mean funding. I don't want to see the master plan just sit on a shelf somewhere. Thanks for considering this proposal as well.	
	Name not available, inside Kemp Mill/4 Corners	
Pickleball Courts	I'd like to see more dedicated pickle ball courts.	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Ian Cooper, inside Kemp Mill/4 Corners	
Brookside Gardens	Brookside Gardens has bicycle parking facilities that are at least 100 yards from the visitor center - on the opposite side of the visitor car park. Forcing cyclists to walk another 100+ yards past a large car park to get to the visitor center makes Brookside Gardens far less attractive to cyclists. The last thing I want to do after a bike ride is walk past a car park while breathing gasoline fumes! The idea that a nature center should prioritize motorists over those of us who use more environmentally friendly forms of transport shows a failure on the part of Montgomery County to think about green issues. There's plenty of room in the car park area close to the visitor center entrance to add bike racks. Why was this not a part of the plan for the recent renovation? It's not as if the drive up to the visitor center is at all difficult or dangerous for cyclists.	Thank you for your support of bike rack amenities. The Department recognizes that bicycle access is fundamental to overall access in addition to good park design. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available	
Bike Rack Amenities	Please accept my suggestion for Parks & Planning to invest in bike racks for all its parks. Two of the three parks closest to my home do not have bike racks and it is frustrating to me as someone who frequently bikes to the park and have my children biking to the park. Those two parks are Randolph Hills Park and Garrett Park Rd Park. I have learned through WABA that only 79 out of 422 parks in Montgomery Parks' system have adequate bike racks for securing a bike. I am also aware that this is an objective of the Montgomery County Bike Master Plan - to have secure and convenient bike parking at all county parks, government buildings, schools and new construction in the coming years. Secure bike parking is essential to encourage visitors to arrive by bike. Using the County bike parking standards guide: https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Bicycle-Parking-Guidelines-Final.pdf would ensure that any bike racks purchased in the future by the park system would be secure and a good investment. One of the biggest costs associated with installing bike racks is the concrete pad that is often needed in a park to create the secure base for a new rack. There are two work arounds to this. First, any park being refurbished, renovated or refreshed will be scheduled for concrete work, and we could ask the Parks department to always include a pad for a bike rack be included in every kind of renovation involving concrete. The other way to save money on the need for a concrete base for bike racks would involve giving over a single parking space meant for cars to a bike corral or bike rack. This would enable a large number of bikes to park in an existing single car space. Bike racks are important for encouraging people to get exercise, avoid using their car to go to the park, and provide bike riders with dignity and respect. They can deter theft and thereby increase safety in parks. They also help to avoid ADA conflicts; often bikes get chained to railings intended to help those who need assistance on ramps. Sometimes a bike chained to a sign post can block pedestrian access. I ask that Montgomery Parks make a plan to fund bike racks over the course of the 2023-2028 budget years. Thanks for considering this proposal.	Thank you for your support of bike rack amenities. The Department recognizes that bicycle access is fundamental to overall access in addition to good park design. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Catherine Kahn, inside Travilah	
Community Gardens	With the continuing monumental need for food assistance in MoCo, I would like to see the expansion of community gardens to include underserved areas. There is a huge interest in "growing your own" but with garden plots in high demand, there are few spots available. Placement considerations should include ease of accessibility by public transportation or placement within high need neighborhoods and waved leasing fees for those who qualify.	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Transit and Bicycle access	Please prioritize connectivity with surrounding communities through improved transit and bicycle access and way finding signage. Similar to Safe Routes to Schools, MoCo Parks should have safe routes to access nature. All of our parks should have a walk and transit audit followed by a complete build out of sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike paths within a one mile walk shed. This would require a partnership between Montgomery Parks and MCDOT, SHA, and WMATA.	Thanks for your support on park access. Parks recognize that transit and bicycle access is fundamental aspect in addition to the good park design. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Kathy Sheram, inside Upper Rock Creek	
Support for nature centers	The nature centers within the Montgomery Parks system are an essential resource to the county -- they serve MC residents and visitors as accessible oases where people can explore, marvel, relax, and re-charge. They deserve the county's fullest support. My husband and I have lived in Montgomery County since 1988, and for more than 30 years we have reaped enormous benefit from Montgomery Parks' network of nature centers, especially Meadowside, which we visit regularly. Over the years we have introduced countless family and friends to these centers, and the fact that the centers and their parks have been maintained in such excellent condition season by season, year by year, decade by decade is an amazing accomplishment and speaks to the dedication of the Montgomery Parks staff and the foresight and commitment of the county's leadership. We urge Montgomery Parks through its Capital Improvements Program not only to maintain its support to our nature centers but to increase it to whatever degree possible. Sincerely,	Thank you for your interest in nature centers. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Kathy Sheram Derwood, Maryland	
	Name not available, inside Goshen	
Community Gardens, Pickleball Courts	I would like to see the incorporation of more community gardens into parks and other recreational spaces. I live in Damascus and the closest community garden plots to me are 10 plots in Germantown that are already spoken for. I would also like pickleball courts upcounty near where I live. I've only seen pickleball courts down county.	Item 1: Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities Item 2: Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Anne Tulkin, inside Kemp Mill/4 Corners	
Long Branch-Wayne Local Park	June 15, 2021 Dear Planning Board Members and Montgomery Parks Staff, We are reaching out to you today regarding the Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2023 -- 2028. Long Branch-Wayne Local Park is one of the parks in line for renovations/enhancements. This park is indeed sorely in need of upgrades and updates. Having said that, we believe that all of the parks in Long Branch including Long Branch Arliss, Long Branch Garland, Flower Ave Urban, and New Hampshire Estates Parks are also in desperate need of updates and upgrades. We would urge you, therefore, to	Thank you for your interest in the Long Branch area. Park staff recognizes the need for improvements to these parks and have been working to prioritize projects in this area. Parks is developing a Long Branch Area Initiative to coordinate improvements among parks in this area. Long Branch Wayne Local Park is

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	expand the number of Long Branch parks to be included in your CIP upgrade planning. Many of these parks -- like much of the wider community -- have long suffered from neglect and under-investment. We are asking that the Planning Board and Parks Department go beyond the CIP process and truly apply the equity lens to our situation, provide funds to update all of the parks in Long Branch, and make up for a lack of attention our community has received in the past. We urge you to add to the CIP the following elements: 1) Long Branch Wayne and/or to the closest adjacent park (i.e., the park behind the community center at 8700 Piney Branch Rd.), Consider adding two permanent high-quality natural grass soccer fields, along with permanent seating structures for viewers; add baseball diamonds. 2) Long Branch Arliss, Long Branch Garland, and New Hampshire Estates Parks add updated play structures; 3) Flower Ave. Urban Park, add a permanent stage for performances; In Long Branch, which is designated as an"enterprise zone" by the county, the parks are often the only outdoor spaces available to its residents for contact with nature, and, for its young people, for access to play and, in general, constructive, supervised socializing. By providing soccer facilities that attract the wider involvement of the family and community, a real social problem would be addressed -- that of youths who are bored due to the lack of constructive, family-oriented activities. Full implementation of this list of recommendations would lead, we believe, to an exemplary and well used parks system, one that brings the whole Long Branch community together in fun, active and responsible ways. Full funding in the CIP to address the needs at Long Branch-Wayne Local Park, and funding to address the other parks in Long Branch is a step in the right direction to address the historic inequity our community has faced. Sincerely, Annie Tulkin, Long Branch Resident Bruce Baker, Director, Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research (CHEER) Ginger Tansey, President, Sligo-Branview Community Association (SBCA) on behalf of the SBCA Board of Directors Paul Grenier, Administrator, Long Branch Business League Carlos Perozo, President, Long Branch Business League	included in the Park Refreshers program for upcoming renovations. Parks has begun design work for a mini refresher at Long Branch Garland Park, including a signature bridge crossing Long Branch, and a community meeting anticipated for Fall 2021. Parks is evaluating improvements to Long Branch Local Park. Long Branch Stream Valley Park, and Long Branch Arliss Park, and Quebec Terrace Park. The Department will also be evaluating needed improvements to New Hampshire Estates Park within the next several years following construction of the Purple Line. Activation improvements to Flower Avenue Park UP are underway.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Dan Bonner, inside Clarksburg	
Ballfields	There are no lighted rectangular county fields in upcounty to allow sports practices. Adding lights to existing fields or working with MCPS to allow lights would help youth sports to grow and be more affordable in Clarksburg/Germantown/Damascus area.	Thank you for your interest in athletic fields. Parks agrees that lighting allows for extended use on fields. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Community Gardens, Norwood LP Improvements	I would love to see some land set aside for community gardening. And I'm sorry, but I have to take the opportunity to say that the plan to mutilate Norwood Park with the insertion of a grotesque dog park, despite the extremely clear opposition of the larger community, doesn't inspire much confidence in the premise that your mission to actually serve the public -- despite whatever larger rationalizations are being promoted. Dog parks may be desirable amenities, but not where it sacrifices so much of irreplaceable value, and the lack of sensitivity in recognizing what represents the greater good is nothing short of staggering.	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available	
Athey Property	Please proceed with the park development of the Athey family property at 15510 Athey Rd, Burtonsville, MD that was purchased in 2013 by park and planning. The property has become quite overgrown and unsightly over the years and requires at a minimum some regular maintenance until it is developed into park & sport fields as originally proposed.	Thank you for your interest in Santini Road Local Park. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities. For park maintenance concerns, please do not hesitate to report them to our Customer Service Line at 301-495-2595 or e-mail us at Info@MontgomeryParks.org so they can be shared with our Operations staff.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Name not available, inside Kemp Mill/4 Corners	
Transportation access	Promote and improve public transportation access to parks so that all citizens can easily visit the parks and activities that the parks provide.	Thanks for your support on transportation access. Parks recognize that transit access is fundamental aspect in addition to the good park design. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available, inside Kensington/Wheaton	
ADA accessibility	There's a need for a public handicapped accessible therapy pool kept above temperature 85-92? For people with injuries, arthritis, and other chronic pain conditions. There's also a lot of residents that take their dogs to swim out of the county to Anne Arundel Co parks for the dog beaches. Even worse, they take their dogs to swim in local creeks and lakes which often have bacteria and blue green algae. It would be nice to have a pool or man-made pond & splash pad for dogs, with sand beach, also, in the winter it would be nice to have a concrete play area for dogs playing with balls. I also think it would be cool to have a beach-like pool or lake for residents and splash fountains.	Thanks for your comments. Parks has developed a long term yet rigorous Transition Plan to address accessibility issues throughout the County park system. It is our goal to provide accessible parks and amenities for our County residents. The improvements include all that are mentioned in the comments such as accessible routes, playgrounds, trails, picnic shelters, courts, and fields and more. Any new parks and amenities that are built in our park system will be fully accessible. Please note that community pool services are generally provided by the County Department of Recreation rather than Parks. Thank you for your interest in dog parks. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies dog parks as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
		your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Name not available, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Pickleball Courts	There is no outdoor pickle ball court in Cabin John. I am hopeful that we can add pickle ball court into the tennis court near the one lane bridge. Thanks!	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	David Fogel, inside Silver Spring	
Acorn Urban Park	Hi, I'd like to request more investment in terms of play equipment and other upgrades for Acorn Park in downtown Silver Spring.	Thank you for your interest in Acorn Urban Park. Activation improvements are underway to provide some additional amenities to Newell Street. The facility plan for Acorn UP is on hold while MCDOT determines whether Newell Street will be permanently closed, which would allow expansion of the park.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Kate Diaz, inside Kemp Mill/4 Corners	
Long Branch Area Playgrounds	Upgrade and replace all the upper Long Branch area playgrounds (specifically Long Branch Arliss, Long Branch Local, Long Branch Wayne, and Long Branch Garland) Install more amenities in these parks, such as gazebos, grills, benches, etc. that make it a more welcoming environment. Long Branch-Arliss is particularly well suited for such investment. Improve management of the surrounding forest, address invasive plants and provide tree maintenance to support healthy growth. Extend Long Branch Trail to the Long Branch Community Center complex through, at minimum, a safe pedestrian crosswalk over Piney Branch. Preferably extend the trail up to Upper Long Branch park. Address the erosion and other maintenance concerns onthe people's choice trail that leads from Long Branch Community Center to Upper Long Branch Neighborhood Park.	Thank you for your interest in the Long Branch area. Park staff recognizes the need for improvements to these parks and have been working to prioritize projects in this area. Parks is developing a Long Branch Area Initiative to coordinate improvements among parks in this area. Long Branch Wayne Local Park is included in the Park Refreshers program for upcoming renovations, which includes playground replacement. Parks has begun design work for a mini refresher at Long Branch Garland Park, including a signature bridge crossing Long Branch, and a community meeting anticipated for Fall 2021. Parks is evaluating improvements to Long Branch Local Park. Long Branch Stream Valley Park, and Long Branch Arliss Park, and Quebec Terrace Park. The Department will also be evaluating needed improvements to New Hampshire Estates Park within the next several years following construction of the Purple Line. Activation improvements to Flower Avenue Park UP are underway. Please note that Parks is working with MTA to relocate the Long Branch Trail of Piney Branch Road to the Barron Street intersection, and we will be investigating the trail extension as part of our upcoming Long Branch Initiative. We expect to hold public meetings later this fall. With respect to the playgrounds, they are inspected monthly by certified playground safety inspectors and safety issues are corrected as they are noted. We also have a project under design to replace the playground Long Branch Garland Park.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Joe Fritsch, inside Olney	
Carson Farm Park	Build the Fieldcrest Rd parking access to the Carson Farm Park. Second Chance Wildlife Center, with a future planned bike park. Current access to this location is along the dead end, Barcellona Drive. This is very disruptive to the residents. The future planned bike park at the Carson Farm Park requires a new access road be build from Fieldcrest Rd. Upper Rock Creek Trail Corridor Plan, page 18 https://www.montgomeryparks.org/uploads/2018/04/2008-Upper.Rock_.Creek_.trail_.plan-508update.pdf The plan called for a temporary gravel road in FY 11-12 with this new access and parking to be paved in the future (page 23). Please build the new access from Fieldcrest Rd now to improve the quality of life for the residents on Barcellona Drive, improve access to Second Chance Wildlife center and allow building of the bike park to begin quickly once Second Chance Wildlife Center relocates.	Thanks for your interest in Carson Farm Park and bike park amenities. The Department recognizes that bicycle access is fundamental to overall access in addition to the good park design. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Open Town Hall Comment	Staff Response
	Michael Caruso, inside Takoma Park	
Transit and Bicycle access	Thank you for the opportunity to comment with these ideas. I support funding for Montgomery Parks focused on: 1. More and better bicycle parking at all parks, trails, fields, and other facilities; 2. A widening of the Sligo Creek Trail so that bicyclists and pedestrians can comfortably co-exist in each direction on the trail; and 3. Extension and connectivity of Long Branch Trail to other park trails. **(1) More and better bicycle parking at all parks, trails, fields, and other facilities** I support respondent Alison Gillespie's submitted idea for additional and better bicycle parking at park facilities. **(2) A widening of the Sligo Creek Trail so that bicyclists and pedestrians can comfortably co-exist in each direction on the trail** As a family bicyclist, riding on Sligo Creek Parkway on the weekend is wonderful for those roads that are closed to vehicular traffic. Riding on the roads that are open to vehicles is not comfortable for young families and forces us onto the wonderful trail. The trail on most weekend days is frequently used by both pedestrians and bicyclists such that riding a bicycle together with pedestrians can become challenging. Montgomery County's Bicycle Facility Design Toolkit recommends â€œThe minimum width to enable side-by-side travel and passing is 11 feet.â€• (https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Bicycle-Facility-Design-Toolkit-May-2018.pdf) It would be wonderful if the trail could take a *minimum* 11-foot width approach and aim for wider path, as land permits. **(3) Extension and connectivity of Long Branch Trail to other park trails** Montgomery Parks is already considering a short extension of Long Branch Trail's southern most terminus to Carroll Ave. I would like to see Long Branch extended to Sligo Creek Trail on the southern end and extended to Fire Engine Park on the northern terminus, with safe, bicycle-friendly connectivity to the YMCA, Blair High School, and the Four Corners.	Thanks for your interest in trails and the Open Parkways program. Parks recognize that bicycle access is fundamental aspect in addition to good park design. Please note that most of our hard surface trail system lies within our Stream Valley Parks, which will severely limit the ability to widen trails. We are also investigating trail connectivity and community connections throughout the system. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Letters and Correspondence May 18 Through June 17

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Wayne Breslyn	
General Support for parks, plantings, and open spaces	Dear MNC-Commission, As a lifelong resident of Montgomery County the Parks are one of my top priorities. Please provide adequate funding for parks, as well as trees and natural open spaces, in the 2023-2028 planning. Thank you Wayne Breslyn 1916 Stanley Ave, Rockville, MD 20851 301 230-2545	Thank you very much for your support of Parks and our CIP funding. Parks is currently working on recommendations for the FY23-28 CIP using the evaluation and prioritization criteria the Board discussed in April 2021. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Fairouz Makhlouf	
Community Gardens	Hello, I am currently part of the Montgomery county community garden. I was so happy when I was finally able to get a spot. It is an amazing experience and I know many of my family and friends are interested but unfortunately the space is limited. Hopefully more spaces can be added. Gardening is very therapeutic and also can help provide organic food for the family which otherwise can't be afforded. It also help to keep green spaces in Montgomery county. which will help pollution. It brings sense of community. I can't enforce enough on the importance of such experience. Thanks Fairouz Makhlouf(Brink Rd garden)	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Claire Schulkey	
Community Gardens	Good morning, I would like to write to in support of the maintanance and expansion of the community garden program in Montgomery county. I have benefited from the program for two years, and it has supported mental and physical health and access to fresh fruit and vegetables. It is an enjoyable and rewarding program which deserves funding and expansion to provide wider access to the community. Best Claire Schulkey Montgomery county resident	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Max Wilson	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Dear Planning Board, My family and I are regular visitors to the Locust Grove Nature Center. We live only a few minutes away in Montgomery County. The summer camps at Locust Grove are my son's absolute favorite. We regularly attend campfires, Hike & Seek events, and other programming as a family. The staff consistently puts on high quality, engaging events but the facilities at Locust Grove are not adequate to fulfill the potential or the comunity needs. The nature center is small and outdated. They don't have the capacity to serve the level of demand in the community. We are routinely unable to register for activities that we are interested in because they are already full. Because of how valuable this resource has been to our family and because of how much more valuable it could be, I would like to advocate for the allocation of funds to support the renovation of the nature center. We look forward to continuing to make the most of this incredible resource and want it to be able to serve as many people in the Montgomery County community as possible. Thank you for your consideration, Max Wilson 8513 Warde Ter Potomac, MD 20854 mercretas@hotmail.com	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and the Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Anne Roland	
Brookside Gardens	I am writing in support of capital projects at Brookside Gardens for the 2023-2028 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). I am a long-time Montgomery County resident, a frequent visitor to the gardens, a volunteer, and the Vice President of the Friends of Brookside Gardens. Through each of these roles, I see the importance of Brookside Gardens to the community. It is essential for Montgomery Parks to invest in Brookside Gardens construction and renovation to meet current expectations for tourist amenities and increased visitation. New Conservatory. The conservatory is 53 years old. This building, which I have loved to visit over the years with my family leaks, and floods. There should be more bathrooms, including a family bathroom to serve younger and older visitors who need assistance. A new conservatory would also allow for better use of meeting and classroom space, since demand for such space at Brookside has grown significantly. Please fund a new conservatory as soon as possible. Rose Garden renovation. As a volunteer at the Visitor Center, I have directed hundreds of visitors to the Rose Garden, a highlight of their walking tour. However, the structures and paths in this garden are deteriorating after so many years of heavy use. Renovating the Rose Garden is a practical investment in an important and unique community resource. Formal Garden Renovation, with ADA compliance. The ramps in the Formal Gardens are too steep and are not ADA compliant. Visitors can have difficulty navigating the steps. All the spaces at Brookside Gardens should be accessible to all visitors. Please fully fund the Formal Gardens	Thank you for your interest in Brookside Gardens. The Department of Parks recognizes the popularity of the gardens as a countywide destination and is well aware of the age and condition of the infrastructure. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	renovation. This year, we all learned the significance of Montgomery Parks' 50-year investment in Brookside Gardens. People needed, and still need, a restorative place to take the family, learn about the environment, and visit safely with friends. Please continue this wise investment by funding projects for Brookside Gardens in the CIP. Sincerely, Anne Roland 216 Pewter Lane Silver Spring, MD 20905	
	Aileen Hilliard	
Community Gardens	Montgomery County is blessed with a fantastic parks system. I grew up in Silver Spring and was fortunate enough to be able to enjoy Sligo Creek Parkway, Wheaton Regional Park, Brookside Gardens, and many other settings in nature. I have had a garden plot at Briggs Chaney Community Garden for the past 6 years. I'm urging the County to build more Community Gardens. So many residents of Montgomery County started gardening during the pandemic and want to have access to garden plots. Gardening is a healthy hobby which also can save families money on food expenses, and brings great rewards when you harvest and eat your freshly-grown produce. At Briggs Chaney, gardeners also grow extra vegetables and herbs to contribute to the "Harvest Share" program which donates produce to homeless shelters and Manna and other organizations serving the food-insecure families in Montgomery County. There are always waiting lists for the current Community Gardens - it would greatly benefit the County to include the expansion of the Community Garden program in your budget for	Thank you for your interest in community gardens. The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan identifies Community Gardens as a priority since Montgomery County is quickly urbanizing. We will consider your input as we evaluate project prioritie

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	2023-2028. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Aileen Hilliard 104 Whitmoor Terrace Silver Spring, MD 20901 hoyden401@yahoo.com	
	Niels Nielsen	
Trail Improvements, General support for Parks CIP	Good morning, I am writing to lend my support for full funding of the projects included in the Capital Improvement Program. Moreover, cuts made to the budget in 2020 should be reversed as the financial health of our State and County have improved. As a volunteer liaison for Rockinghorse Garden and someone who enjoys hiking on trails in the County Parks, I've experienced the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of being able to spend time outside, especially in the past year and half when so much of our lives were disrupted. The gardeners at Rockinghorse have become a vibrant community, helping each other and regularly donating to food banks for our needy neighbors. With increased use of the parks comes additional wear and tear on trails, roads, buildings, and other facilities. Trees and plants need to be tended and replaced as they age and die. Our waterways need care to remain clean and a welcoming place for wildlife. The County Parks make Montgomery County a desirable place to live and attract new residents and businesses. Please approve the CIP budget and consider increased investment in the place we live. Thank you, Niels --	Thank you very much for your support of Parks and our CIP funding. Parks is currently working on recommendations for the FY23-28 CIP using the evaluation and prioritization criteria the Board discussed in April 2021. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Niels Nielsen niels6nielsen@gmail.com 703-926-4600 (cell)	
	John Combs	
Support for nature centers	1. My name is John Combs, I have been a Montgomery County resident for more than 50 years. I am retired from a 38 year career in the Federal Service. Since I retired I have volunteered as a Weed Warrior for Montgomery Parks and since 2014 I have qualified as a Master Naturalist and have put in 420 hours of voluntary service to Montgomery Parks in addition to the over 120 hours of initial and advanced training. My goal in volunteering is to help Montgomery County citizens, and particularly young people, appreciate the wonders of the Natural World. I have volunteered at Apple festivals, Winter Solstice, Maryland Emancipation Day Celebrations, Raptor festivals, Firefly shows, Wings of Fancy Butterfly shows, PawPaw festivals and as a Host at Meadowside Nature Center. I put in all this voluntary time because I am convinced that we have wonderful natural resources in Montgomery County but they are threatened by many aspects of our modern lifestyles and we need to change our relationship with the natural world and understand how dependent we are on the benefits of nature. 2. I support the need for facility renovations at Brookside Nature Center because the Center plays a crucial role in helping Montgomery County citizens learn about and experience the wonders of the natural world upon which we all depend. 3. Many of our citizens do not realize the crucial role that natural systems play in our daily life and how dependent we are on free services that we	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	receive from nature. Basic photosynthesis of green plants provide the only source of food as well as oxygen and water vapor. These services are referred to as ecosystem services and one can only imagine the cost of artificially providing such services. The Master Naturalist listserv has recently documented the dramatic reduction in bees and other natural pollinators in Maryland this spring. If natural pollinators are not available how will we artificially complete pollinations of our park areas? My experience as a host at Meadowside Nature Center alerted me to the significant number of mothers and fathers who bring their children to the nature centers on a regular basis to learn about the natural world and enjoy the exercise and benefits of exposure to nature. In addition both school children and adults, some with disabilities, are frequent visitors. There are numerous studies that document the beneficial effect that nature has on emotional wellbeing of children. “In The Human Relationship with Nature, Peter Khan points to the findings of over one hundred studies that confirm that one of the main benefits of spending time in nature is stress reduction.”1 “Howard Frumkin, director of the National Center for Environmental Health at the Centers for Disease Control , recently described the clear benefits of nature experiences to healthy child development, and to adult well-being.”2 1 Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv, Algonquin Books, 2008, page 50 2 Last Child in the Woods page 355 I believe that supporting the facility renovations at Brookside Nature Center is crucial to ensure that our citizens have high quality nature	

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	education and experiences.	
	Burr Gray, Presdent - Friends of Cabin John Creek	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Casey Anderson - M-NCPPC Chair Dear Mr Anderson, On behalf of Friends of Cabin John Creek (FoCJC - https://www.cabinjohncreek.org/) and our 500 plus members, we write in support of one of our most important partners in the Cabin John Creek watershed - the Locust Grove Nature Center. We ask that funding for the Nature Center be allocated in the FY 23-28 Capital Improvements Program sufficient to allow for renovation/expansion for the following reasons: 1. Increased use and popularity of outdoor recreation and environmental education facilities -- the outdated facility does not reflect current educational needs. 2. Lack of space and resources in the facility limits the amount of programming that can be carried out and also limits collaboration with community groups such as FoCJC. 3. The increased urbanization of the Cabin John Creek watershed creates an even more essential need for a center for environmental education at Locust Grove. The Nature Center has outgrown its limited space, which means they can't offer enough programming to meet demands. Our understanding is that they turn away schools, Scouts, and other community groups every weekend. The exhibits in the Program Room are tired and outdated (the tree exhibit still plays animal sounds from cassette tapes). If the Center has more space, they will not be forced to choose between groups but could instead offer a full	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and watershed restoration. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	range of programming for kids of all ages. Additionally, we also suggest that the name Locust Grove Nature Center be changed to the Cabin John Creek Nature Center. "Locust Grove" was a colonial era and 19th century slave-holding plantation which included hundreds of acres which later became Montgomery Mall and Cabin John Regional Park. (See the article in the Bethesda magazine https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesdamagazine/ march-april-2021/a-shameful-past/) We feel it particularly timely to change the name of the nature center to one which is truly welcoming to all, is clearly relatable and reflects the environment in which it is located. While the name should be changed, at the same time there should be an interpretive panel or exhibit at the Center, explaining the history of Locust Grove plantation -- including the slaves -- and the fact that there used to be a grist and saw mill at Cabin John Creek. Sincerely, Burr Gray FoCJC - President 240-753-5918 (c)	
	Marcia Polhamus	

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
Brookside Nature Center	I won't be able to attend the Public Forum but wanted to speak up and ask for additional funds for Brookside Nature Center. It is a great park, centrally located, with lots of programs and events for visitors. We often spend time with the naturalists on hikes or talks about nature. As we come out of our enforced confinement there are opportunities to grow the visitor base because so many people have taken to the parks. I joined a MOCO over 50 hiking club on Mondays and am surprised at how many people do not know about the County Nature Centers and their programs. I am spreading the word and often mention Brooksides' great nature programs. Thanks.	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Brookside Nature Center. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Christina Johnson	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Dear Montgomery County Planning Board, Thank you for the opportunity to give comments on the Capital Improvement Program. As a Montgomery County resident, Montgomery Parks Volunteer and the mother of two children, 6 & 8, who stay actively enrolled in Montgomery Parks programming I strongly encourage that Locust Grove Nature be considered for renovation. Locust Grove Nature Center is such a great center but the building is very outdated and lacks the square footage that could make it an amazing state of the art center. As a volunteer, I worked alongside the Naturalists as they planned programming and watched as they struggled (and failed) to meet demand. I heard the phones ring and they would have to tell families "This program is full." or "We are unable to offer more time slots at the moment". This is because of the limited space within the facility. I could see many more possibilities to provide these enriching programs if the facility were up to date and expanded. My son attended the preschool program with Locust Grove and it has been paramount in his love of nature. As fantastic as the program was, it was a very limited program that could be improved with an expanded facility and funds allocated to boost this program. As the pandemic encouraged families to spend more time outside it gave a renewed sense of how important nature is. Nature Centers were always there but as a love for nature and environmental education has grown it is very important that these spaces are available and updated to give the best and most accurate experience possible. Thank you for your time, Christina Johnson	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Emily Perkins	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Hello, I am writing to ask you to consider allocating funds to update Locust Grove Nature Center. I live in Montgomery County, and my family has found the county's nature centers to be an invaluable resource, especially during the pandemic when we have been spending more time outside. My youngest son attended preschool through the Nature Explorers program, first in person and then through this year's virtual program. We have also enjoyed a wide variety of programs as a family, including the monthly Hike & Seek events at Locust Grove and the flying squirrel and maple syrup programs at Brookside Nature Center. We are always impressed with the thought and creativity that is put into every program we have attended. The staff does a lot with the limited indoor space, and we would love to see the building expanded so that they could offer more programming to families and other groups in our community. Sincerely, Emily Perkins Bethesda, MD	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Victoriya Makrishcheva	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Dear Montgomery Planning Board Representative, I am Victoriya Makrishcheva, the parent of two boys who loved to attend the Locust Grove Nature Center, writing in support of updates and renovations for the center. As a family, we came to absolutely love this center and the staff. They are not simply great naturalists, but importantly, know how to connect deeply with both children and parents. They are enthusiastic and dedicated to helping children learn about nature and animals. So, it is not surprising that we feel at home and welcomed when we visit the Center. We also feel safe to send our children to the programs offered by the Center. Our younger son attended Locust Grove Nature Center programs for two years. He was in the Nature Explorers program during all seasons. He loved to explore nature, animals, play outside in any weather, jump, climb, run, get muddy. He called it “my forest school”. We also loved the eight different summer camps, where both of our sons went, as well as enjoyed one-day events such as Fairy Tale Day or Mud Day. The demand for their programs clearly outstrips the supply. For example, our favorite camp has a very long waiting list. To get a spot, I wait until midnight, when the registration opens. Unfortunately, besides all possible efforts to make the center as cozy and functional as possible, many of the features in the center are outdated and the center is too tiny to accommodate the demand for all the wonderful programs that the Center has the capacity and expertise to create. We also know that due to this limitation, the Center routinely turns down	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	larger groups on a weekly basis. We would love the center to be able to meet the demand of the community, so that they don't have to turn away schools, scouts and other community groups. Their Program Room is so outdated that they still play animal sounds from the cassette tapes. Also, on the Tree Exhibit most of the buttons do not work at all. Clearly, the Center needs and deserves more funds to modernize its facilities, exhibits, and programs. Victoriya Makrishcheva and Roman Gorelik	
	Alexis Miller	
Locust Grove Nature Center	To Whom It May Concern: As a mother of two young children, we love locust grove nature center. But we recognize that it is old and outdated, and could really use an upgrade to better serve our ever developing community. For programming purposes, they are nothing more than empty rooms that the staff is doing their best to use for educational purposes. We just had the absolute best experience with their outdoor mommy and me class, but saw that they were absolutely no physical resources for any indoor part of the class. The building itself is rundown and shabby, does not look like a building fit for Montgomery county residents, or the taxes we pay. I would love to see Locust Grove included on a list of updates and renovations that there's more spectacular space for the spectacular staff that works there to work with a local kids in the community! Thank you Alexis Miller	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Kirk Shinkle	
Northwest Branch RP	I'm Kirk Shinkle, a Silver Spring resident and just one of hundreds of Montomery County disc golf players. I appreciate the Commission's time, and would like to propose the creation of a disc golf course in Montgomery County to accommodate a growing number of Maryland players. Course creation has been embraced by municipalities across the country for a host of reasons: • Disc golf demand is growing. The sports governing body, the PDGA, reported an 83%surge in new membership during 2020 despite Covid-related cancellation of more than a quarter of all tournaments. Nationwide, 35 million rounds were played in 2020, and continued growth is forecast this year. • Course implementation is low cost. A high-quality 18-hole course can be constructed for less than $40,000, essentially the cost of a new tennis court. • Environmental impact is minimal. Courses can be created on less than 1 acre per hole, and incorporate existing topography. Disc golf fairways are less intrusive than traditional golf courses, and have no water requirements. • Inclusive, year-round play. All-season courses, reasonable equipment costs and low-impact exercise make the sport ideal for players of all ages and skill levels. Currently, of Maryland's approximately 50 existing disc golf courses, just two - Seneca Creek and Calvert Road - are within reasonable driving distance for county players and neither are easily accessible to downcounty residents. The opportunity exists for our county to create a world-class course near a major population center. After soliciting generous input from county park	Thank you for your interest in disc golf and Northwest Branch Recreational Park. During the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) plan update process, we will be analyzing sports and recreational trends, including disc golf.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	planners, I would like to suggest Northwest Branch Recreational Park as a proposed location. The park has appropriate recreational acreage, existing parking capacity at the National Capital Trolley Museum, and is situated within just a few miles of the county's largest population centers and the ICC. In conclusion, disc golf's continuing growth, expanding player base and the current lack of facilities in our county make this project an ideal candidate for inclusion in upcoming capital improvement initiatives. Thank you for your time, Kirk Shinkle Additional resources: UDisc's Disc Golf Growth Report, PDGA 2020 Year-End Demographics Hello! I'm following up on my submitted testimony for the Board's 6/10 meeting regarding the creation of a disc golf course in Northwest Branch Recreational Park (or at another appropriate down-county location). Are there any additional opportunities to advocate for inclusion of this project in the upcoming CIP planning process? I've been discussing the possibility of a MoCo course with the local disc golf community, and I can tell you that there's a ton of interest from players, volunteers, and even a few local businesses willing to explore sponsoring such a venue. Thanks! Kirk Shinkle 917.664.2596	

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Janet Walker	
Locust Grove Nature Center	I'd like to advocate for funding a specific project and that is the renovation and expansion of the Locust Grove Nature Center and its grounds. Having volunteered there and using the center as a classroom, project area, and reception space, I have first-hand knowledge that the user-base has vastly outgrown its physical facilities. I retired from a career in public garden and museum management, entered Maryland's Master Naturalist program, and soon drifted under the spell of our splendid chain of regional nature centers. As a volunteer for them, I've seen firsthand how marvelously they're spreading their increasingly critical message, and how receptive and enthusiastic their audience has become. The Locust Grove Nature Center is no longer equal to the demand. It's too small to accommodate even its own staff, given the complexity of the projects they're managing, let alone the growing volume	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	of visitors. The cramped exhibits need refurbishment, expansion, and up-to-date technology. The classroom was designed for children and also serves as the space for everything other than offices, limiting access for all the other reasons our residents go to nature centers and have to be turned away because they can't be accommodated. We could do so much more! And the need is there. If we build it, they will come.	Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Ken Bawer	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Dear Chair Anderson: As a long-time volunteer Parks Weed Warrior supervisor and having become a Maryland Master Naturalist sponsored by Montgomery Parks, I can attest to both the value of the Parks Nature Centers and the skill, knowledge, and effectiveness of their Naturalists. Having said that, there is a great need for capital improvements at some of the Nature Centers, particularly the Locust Grove Nature Center. Especially when compared to other Nature Centers, Locust Grove is sorely in need of an upgrade (either a renovation or an entirely new building). When I took my Master Naturalist training there, we were forced to use the unheated "log cabin" - a less than ideal learning experience given the cold weather at the time. More classroom space and exhibit areas would provide the opportunity for more educational experiences for more people - from children to adult programming. This, in turn, will encourage residents to become stronger advocates for our Park system. Thank-you for your consideration. Sincerely, Ken Bawer Montgomery County Resident	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Tony Kaminski	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Dear Chair, I have been a Maryland Master Naturalist since 2017 and I got my start at Locust Grove Nature Center. It may be one of the smallest nature centers, but it has a huge heart and a large following of loyal naturalists. My niece's daughter, Cora, was introduced to the Locust Grove Nature Center a few years ago at age 5 and she has become a budding naturalist after attending some of great Locust Grove's programs. However, as good as Locust Grove Nature Center is, it needs additional resources. It has outgrown its limited space. The number of programs and events does not meet the growing demand. All too often schools, scouts, and other community groups are turned away every weekend because of limited resources. The exhibits in the Program Room are tired and outdated (the tree exhibit still plays animal sounds from cassette tapes!). The trails have steep slopes and staircases that make programming difficult for older or disabled people. What is needed is more classroom space, so that the staff is not forced to choose between groups, but could instead offer a full range of programming for kids and adults. The Center wants to offer more accessible trails and outdoor exhibits to make programming open to all and wants to have exhibits that encourage the community to learn and reflect on the environmental issues of the modern urban landscape. To do so, the Locust Grove needs to be renovated! It needs funding to meet the demands of the current generation. Please invest in the community and the environment by investing in the Locust Grove Nature Center. Your investment	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	will pay huge dividends!!! Tony Kaminski	
	Warren Chan	
Pedestrian and bicycle access LFP	To those concerned: I urge MoCo Parks to include in their 2023 Capital Improvement Plan funds to design and install safe pedestrian and bicycle access along the roadway of the Little Falls Parkway (LFP) from Mass Ave to Arlington Road. It seems wrong with Montgomery County's Vision Zero and Climate Change goals that a road linking residential areas to local amenities (such as a school, multiple playgrounds, the Bethesda Pool, local commercial districts on River and Arlington Roads, and multiple bus stops) has no safe pedestrian or bicycle access along the roadway. There are no sidewalks or trails for pedestrians and bicyclist along the LFP. Instead, LFP has signs directing trail users to use the unprotected unmaintained shoulders of the roadway. The LFP design with 4 wide (11 to 12 foot) lanes and a landscaped median encourages drivers to speed since the (so-called) parkway looks like a highway. While commercial vehicles are banned, this ban is not enforced. During weekday business hours, commercial vehicles make up 15-20% of the traffic based on my observations. The commercial traffic adds congestion to the roadway making use of the roadway shoulders even more dangerous for people walking of biking. Allowing parkways to become freeways was one of the great planning mistakes of the 20th century. Perhaps the lack of safe pedestrian	Thank you for your interest in the Open Parkways program and Little Falls Parkway. Parks is evaluating options for long-term solutions to maintain the program and improving pedestrian access and traffic calming to Little Falls Parkway.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	access was a design legacy of the restricted and sundown neighborhoods adjoining the LFP to limit access and use of amenities along the LFP to those who can afford cars. We need to fix this legacy now. Its time to change the LFP so that it can be accessed by people of all ages and abilities without their cars. We are grateful for the weekend closures of the LFP during the pandemic. The ability to safely walk the LFP shows how everyday use would benefit everyone. Aren't parks for people? Best regards, W Chan	
	Ed Pfister	
Nature Centers	Hello - As a Master Naturalist Intern Volunteer, I am writing to urge the planning board to increase funding for Nature Centers in Montgomery County. Yes, soccer fields and tennis centers are important. But we hope our community also sees nature as a need and recognize their individual roles in protecting our natural environment. In particular, the nature centers are outdated and aging, and many haven't seen any renovations or updates in the last twenty years. County staff continue to struggle to make these spaces accessible to people of all ages and abilities with the outdated infrastructure. In short, the naturalists are doing the best we can, but to stay relevant and keep up with the needs of our community, we need some of this funding to go to updating our nature centers! We especially need to upgrade the centers and programs to target the interests of minorities and increase awareness of the rich cultural contributions of African Americans and other minorities. Thanks for your time.	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Ed Pfister Master Naturalist Intern Volunteer 10717 Seneca Spring Way Montgomery Village, Md 20886	
	Nina Chien	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Hi, my name is Nina Chien and I've been a resident of MoCo for 10 years, and I have 3 kids, ages 10, 5, and 5. We've enjoyed the nature centers of MoCo ever since our kids were little. When they were toddlers, we enjoyed nature center saturday activities, guided hikes, and bonfires. As they got older, we regularly took them to so many nature center events (winter solstice; apple cider days; maple sugaring days; butterfly festival, paw paw festival). My oldest kid had his 4th birthday at Locus Grove. Every summer (precovid), my oldest kid goes to camp for several weeks at Locus Grove (it's one of his favorites, and mine too!), and I plan to send my twins there too as soon as they are old enough next summer. And at least once a season, we go for family hikes at Locust Grove as well as at the other Nature Centers in MoCo. As you can tell, the Nature Centers have nurtured our family as our kids have grown and we continue to enjoy all that they offer. I understand that one or more of the Nature Centers are in need of updates and renovations, and are unable to serve the community fully due to limited space. I understand you have many considerations as you make budget allocation decisions, but I hope you'll consider that the Nature Centers have offered so much to families and residents like us, and will continue to offer more and to more people, with more budget allocations. Thank you! Best,	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Nina Chien 11702 Devilwood Ct. Potomac, MD 20854	
	Carly Woolheater	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Good Afternoon, As the Montgomery County Planning Board works through the decisions for funding allocations for the upcoming year, I'd like to share my experiences with Locust Grove Nature Center and advocate for continued (or actually, additional!!) funding for this and the other Nature Centers in Montgomery County. My daughter started attending the Nature Explorers program at Locust Grove (outdoor preschool program) the first year it was offered -- she has since aged out, but my son was then able to attend before the pandemic started. I cannot stress enough what a wonderful difference these programs have made in their lives. Both kids still talk about the programs there. My son, who tends to be extremely shy, has no desire to go back to regular preschool when the pandemic "ends", but asks constantly to go back to what we call "outdoor school." These programs are a cornerstone in our family and meet an important need in our community -- an opportunity for our kids to learn and grow in a natural environment that is open and available to all citizens of the county, not just the ones who can afford a fancy nature-based private preschool program. There is countless research citing the benefits of outdoor, play-based learning but far too few opportunities in our densely populated areas. I strongly advocate for the continued funding, and hopefully, expansion of these programs in the county. These kinds of opportunities benefit everyone in the county by providing an opportunity for our kids to	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	learn and grow in a physically, emotionally and socially healthy way. Thank you so much for taking the time to read my message - I'm happy to provide any additional information that may be needed in support of these important programs and centers.	
	Adria S. Zeldin	
Locust Grove Nature Center	I have been a Montgomery County resident most of my life. I grew up here and went to Montgomery Co. public schools (1973 Einstein graduate). My son also grew up here and went to Montgomery Co. public schools (2003 BCC graduate). I am a Maryland Master Naturalist and did my training through Mo Co Parks with Jacqueline Raiford at Locust Grove Nature Center. I have done volunteer work at several of the Mo Co Nature Centers. I hike the trails and go birding at the nature centers, especially since the pandemic has closed the nature center buildings. I have noticed that while the programing the nature centers offered in the past (prior to the pandemic) was very well developed, the nature centers themselves, especially Locust Grove, are small, old, and rather outdated. The restrooms alone at Locust Grove are old, outdated and much too small. It is a very old building and seems much too small for all the activities and programing they could offer with larger more modern space. I urge you as a long time Montgomery County resident to renovate Locust Grove and other nature centers. This would be money well spent so that future generations of children can enjoy accessible new nature centers! My granddaughter is only 3, but she will be growing up in Montgomery Co too and I hope she will be able to take advantage of programming at newly renovated and modernized nature centers,	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and for the volunteer work you've done with us. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	especially at Locust Grove! Thank you for your consideration of these issues, Adria S. Zeldin 2405 Colston Drive Silver Spring MD 20910	
	Anneliese Simmons	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Good morning, I am a Montgomery County resident and volunteer at Locust Grove Nature Center. I would like to submit my comments to request that Locust Grove be considered for renovations and upgrades during your next round of funding. Locust Grove is currently not accessible for disabled people due to many steps and uneven and aging pathways. This has been the situation for at least 20 years when I began brining my now grown children to this center. This means that a portion of county citizens cannot use this facility. The Locust Grove building is also aging and only has one room, which must be used for all classes, camps and visitors. This means that the staff must choose between groups rather than expanding programming/classrooms for multiple groups. Previously, I took a professional development course at Locust Grove. During that class, the building was unavailable for visitors. With an expanded building, the center would be able to rent out rooms and bring in additional funding for parks. I know that park facility/rooms are rented for birthday parties, reunions, meetings, etc. I have seen traffic to the park increase as COVID restrictions are lifted and ask leadership to allocate additional resources to Locust Grove. Please contact me with any questions, Anneliese Simmons, 301-642-1388	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Laura Biven	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Dear Montgomery Planning Board, I'm writing to express my deep appreciation for the Locust Grove Nature Center and, indeed, all Montgomery County Parks Nature Centers for the beautiful, natural spaces they provide and their outstanding educational programs and summer camps. It's my hope that you will give full consideration to investing in upgrades and renovations at the Nature Centers with the next allocation of funds. My son's favorite summer camps (by a wide margin) are the summer camps at Locust Grove Nature Center. Jackie Raiford and the other staff at LGNC are knowledgeable and caring and the experiences they provide have substantially encouraged his interest in nature and conservation. There is no other camp in the area that provides this calm, thoughtful interaction with natural spaces. He comes home each day full of knowledge about local animals and a deeper understanding of how we are all connected. With good reason, the summer camps are hugely popular and oversubscribed. Especially during this past year, our family visits to Locust Grove have been a vital tonic against the doldrums of quarantine. Just walking down the hill into the trails of Locust Grove, my kids become relaxed and joyful. We are so appreciative of the "Hike and Seek" and other safe events organized by the LGNC staff; and the educational displays. Locust Grove and the other Montgomery County Nature Centers are the jewels of our county. Please invest in them so that more residents can continue to enjoy them for decades to come. Sincerely,	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Laura Biven Elsmere Ave, Bethesda MD.	
	Kay Taub	
Brookside Nature Center	Dear Chairman Anderson, As I listen to the chorusing of the cicadas, it elicits wonderful memories of the first time I saw these amazing insects on the trails near Brookside Nature Center in 1987. My daughter was born the next year and we began to visit the Brookside and its trails throughout the seasons. A few years later, my son joined our excursions to Brookside, and both children learned to respect and appreciate the "awe" of nature. Over the years, we visited many Montgomery County Parks, but Brookside always felt like "our" nature center. I am an entomologist (I was Director of the Smithsonian's Insect Zoo early in my career), and in 1998 I started a hands-on, live insect program called Incredible Insects. For the next 20 years, I visited hundreds of schools, camps, churches, PAL Centers, scout troops, and nature centers. For the last several years, I had the pleasure of bringing my workshop to the summer camps at Lone Oak and Brookside Nature Centers. These weekly, theme-based summer camps provide essential programs for many children who are not otherwise exposed to the wonders of nature. Since retiring my Incredible Insects program about two years ago - over 30 years since I first visited the cicadas - I became a volunteer at the Brookside Nature Center. Before it closed due to Covid, I created a small Insect Zoo at this Nature Center, and there was a great deal of visitor interest in the exhibit. Brookside has an exceptional staff, and volunteers with many diverse backgrounds. The provision of adequate	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Brookside Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	County funding for Brookside and other similar Nature Centers throughout our County is essential to allow children and families to continue to experience the wonders of nature – which is especially important given climate change, and its threats to the natural world. I urge you to please provide adequate funding to increase the ability of Montgomery County Parks and Nature Centers to educate our community as to the importance of protecting nature and our natural world. Thank you for your consideration of this request. Kay Taub 909 Crest Park Drive Silver Spring, MD 20903	
	Danielle Barr	
Locust Grove Nature Center	To Whom it May Concern: I would love to submit a letter advocating for more funding for updates and renovations to go to Locust Grove Nature Center--a place very dear to my family of 5. We love all of the programming they offer, from the Nature Explorers preschool programs (we've done 3 of them: Nature Explorers, Nature Families, Alumni Explorers), to special themed hikes, adult-events, Scouting activities, and just general enjoyment of the facilities and center. It's all wonderful, but I know they have outgrown their limited space and resources and can't offer enough programming to meet demands. I have put in a request to offer an afterschool program for elementary aged kids--I know my own son thrived in their preschool program and	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	could use an afternoon playing and exploring, learning and growing, like he did before starting Kindergarten/zoom with MCPS this year. I believe they could greatly benefit with more classroom space, so that they may be able to offer a full range of programming for kids of all ages. They've certainly done the best with a very small, old building, but I am super confident that they could do a lot more if Locust Grove was renovated! Thank you for your consideration. Best, Danielle Barr Bethesda resident 301.873.0782	We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.
	Jackie & Robert Fishman	
Pickleball Courts	Hello, Please seriously consider creating dedicated pickle ball courts in parks around the county. The game is becoming very popular with all ages and groups and ethnicities. Thank you, Jackie & Robert Fishman [ADDRESS REDACTED] [ADDRESS REDACTED]	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Mary Beth Hatem	
Pickleball Courts	The demand for pickleball continues to grow. I urge the county to provide more opportunities to play. Pickleball is a terrific recreational opportunity--much easier to learn and easier to play than tennis (or for that matter virtually any of the sports activities supported by the county). Please more courts and more lined tennis courts--particularly in the underserved Takoma Park area. Relative to population, we are woefully underserved.. .both for Montgomery County and for the entire country. Thank you for your efforts. Mary Beth Hatem 704 Auburn Av Takoma Park, MD 20912	Thank you for your interest in pickleball. We recognize the growing demand for outdoor pickleball courts in Montgomery County. We are current working on a multi-year plan to improve the overall court use options in Montgomery County. This includes multi-use overlays, purpose-built, and existing court conversions. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities. In addition, in 2021 Montgomery County Public Schools is scheduled to add pickleball courts to existing tennis courts at select middle schools, including Takoma Park MS and Sligo MS.
	Stacey Band, inside Bethesda/Chevy Chase	
Norwood LP Improvements	Re: Norwood Local Park Improvement Requests Norwood Local Park Facilities Improvement and maintenance of the current facilities need to be evaluated and discussed, prior to any new or additional components are added. I would be happy to participate in efforts to review the needs and concerns that exist on the Norwood Park property. - Park Activity Building: o interior improvements to the floor on the main level, o evaluate tables and chairs and consider replacing, o review white board â€“ location and safety, and determine if need to be remounted. o It is my understanding that the upper level and lower level remained"untouched"• from	Thank you for your interest in Norwood Local Park and comments regarding various desired improvements. Parks is in concept design for improvements the Park Activity Building, including exterior wall repair, roof repair, interior upgrades and making the building more accessible. With respect to the playground, they are inspected monthly by certified playground safety inspectors and safety issues are corrected as they are noted. The lower playground was renovated in 2007 with contributions from the Friends of Norwood Park, and it is in much

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	many many years ago. Is there any plan or intention to update these spaces? o On the back side of the building, the metal railing along the staircase going to the second floor is split, rusted, and hazardous. o Part of the retention walls on the back side of the building are severely cracked and in need of evaluation and repair. - Relocate, update, and replace the toddler playground o The current playground is outdated, many of the materials are metal and concrete, some of the metal fixtures rusted o The current flooring has some â€œcut-outsâ€• and uneven spots that create hazards o Move the playground, so that it is not 50 feet from the Dog Park and the walkway to the Dog Park. Muddiness, Standing Water Issues, and Unsanitary Conditions - Neighbors are increasingly concerned about water-related issues at Norwood Local Park. After a "good" rain, there is usually standing water in numerous places, including on the blacktop trail near the Toddler/Tot Park. At times, the flooding is so bad that areas of the park are unusable and flooding occurs on nearby streets that sit at a lower elevation; such as Chevy Chase Drive and Offutt, and Chevy Chase Drive heading towards Bradley, as well. - To construct the proposed dog park at Norwood, there will likely need to be some land leveling and or raising; which could negatively impact the already existing water and drainage-based issue; thus, leading to additional standing water and more extremely muddy areas, creating additional	better condition than many playgrounds in our park system, so it is not currently scheduled for replacement. The upcoming dog park project will include stormwater management facilities to address drainage and runoff from the work associated with the project.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	unusable spaces and water-related problems for the surrounding areas. - During one of the community meetings with County officials, it was shared that no water-management-based issues would be addressed through this project, if not directly related to the construction of the physical dog park. - These issues need to be thoroughly evaluated and addressed, in an effort to reduce health and safety-based issues regarding dog excrements, reduce exacerbation of storm-water related issues, and to ensure accessibility of park property following rain. Other Norwood Local Park Improvements Needed - The old (and abandoned) community center next to the Co-Op Preschool remains on the proper, in disrepair. What plans and or intentions exist for this facility? - The additional of additional new trees on the Norwood park property bordering the apartment buildings to help buffer noise from the park. There are residents at 4800 Chevy Chase Drive that would be interested in participating in this type of conversation. Many thanks for your time and commitment to Parks.	

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Yunie Hong	
Locust Grove Nature Center	Hello, my name is Yunie Hong and I live in Montgomery County near Locust Grove Nature Center. I am writing to advocate for renovations and expansion of Locust Grove, as well as other Nature Centers in the County. I believe the deadline for comments was yesterday, 6/8/2021, and sincerely apologize for the delay, but hope that my family's comments will still be considered. I have three children, aged 6, 10, and 13. Locust Grove Nature Center has been an integral part of their youth, and I know that it could be a part of so many more, if it is given the resources to expand its space and programming. I am originally from Los Angeles, and there are no nature centers of this kind there. I was pleasantly surprised that Montgomery County offers these public facilities, where children and adults can enjoy nature and participate in so many programs in natural surroundings, and which foster a love of the outdoors. This is so important not only for fostering a sense of environmental stewardship, but also for supporting mental health. At no time has this been more apparent than during COVID. Being outdoors and having a place to hike and spend time safely with others has been so important during this challenging time. We have had so many rich experiences with Locust Grove, which span many years. My daughter has had Girl Scout outings which included hikes, wading in the stream, and Bridging Ceremonies. All of my children have participated in summer camps, year-round events, birthdays, and play dates there. To be honest, however, we were a bit late in the game and didn't start fully utilizing everything Locust	Thank you for your interest in nature centers and Locust Grove Nature Center. We are currently working on some interior renovations at Meadowside Nature Center which include updates to the lobby and new exhibit experiences. At Brookside Nature Center, we are scheduled to start some renovation work to the interior of the building in the fall 2021. The Black Hill Regional Park SEED Classroom project is in design with the hope of opening in spring 2023. More extensive improvements to the Brookside Nature Center are being considered with the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update. We will consider your input as we evaluate project priorities.

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	Grove had to offer until a number of years after we moved to the area. I had seen mentions of the Nature Center in the Recreation Guides, but when I first stopped by to check it out, I was a little disappointed in the small indoor area and wasn't sure if we'd be back. The indoor area had some charming elements, but it didn't seem like somewhere we could spend a lot of time in. The opening hours were very limited as well, and we didn't really know what went on there. However, when I started seeing more of its offerings and explored more of the outdoor area, we really fell in love and realized what it had to offer. All the staff that we've met have been absolutely amazing, and are so committed. I'm so glad we gave it another chance, despite our initial impressions. I especially love the summer camps and special events. After several disappointing experiences, I have learned to set an alarm and be up and at the computer the very minute that summer camp registration opens so that I can snag a coveted spot at one of their camps. It's sad to think how many people miss out. So many more families could be reached if the facilities and programming were expanded. I've brought a lot of people to the Nature Center and many never knew it existed. During the age of screens, social media, and skyrocketing rates of depression, kids need a place to just get out and discover nature and let their imaginations run wild. Adults need a respite and a place to go with their families, their dogs, or themselves. My family and I would love to see Locust Grove expand its facilities and programming so more people can take advantage of this hidden gem. I wanted to let my children speak with their own	

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	words as well, so here are their comments below: Comments from my 6 year old son, Max Lee: "I had my 3rd birthday at Locust Grove Nature Center. We dug up dinosaur bones. And we celebrated another birthday there as well. Me and my older sister play kitchen in the play area, and I like playing the music on the instruments they have there. Like the trash can top and and the string thingy. Also the bamboo clicker. I liked the bird hunt and I liked the story walk. I want to learn more about animals. That is including cicadas. I want there to be more programs about dogs. I've loved the Nature Center so far!" Comments from my 10 year old daughter, Elise Lee: "First of all, I'm a nature person. I enjoy communing with nature and love taking walks. And Locust Grove Nature Center is the place to do it! There are so many plants and animals there that I can observe. I also enjoyed all the camps that I attended there. The camps are fun and have lots of enjoyable nature crafts such as making survival kits and learning how to start a fire with flint and steel. I always have a great time when I go there for a casual hike or just walking our dog! I love visiting there and hope that me and my family can go there for a long time. It would be so cool if there were more activities. I can't wait until we can go there again." Comments from my 13 year old son, Mason Lee: "I really enjoy going to Locust Grove Nature Center. I have attended multiple camps in the past. One of the camps I attended was Survival Camp when I was in 4th grade. I enjoyed it and I experienced new things and was even featured on the local news. I also was a Counselor in Training, which allowed me to interact with people not only my own age but younger kids too.	

Topic	Letter/Correspondence	Staff Response
	It was my first leadership experience and allowed me to cultivate leadership skills. The Nature Center also allows me to experience nature while doing other things, like walking my dog." Thank you very much for taking the time to review our comments. I apologize again for not submitting them yesterday, but I sincerely hope they will be considered when making your funding decisions. Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can be of any assistance. Warm Regards, Yunie Hong	
	Carol Evans	
Black Hill Regional Park	Please find room in your budget for the upkeep of Black Hills Regional Park. The park has been a gem to many of us during the pandemic. The hiking trails need map updating and signage along the trails. This park is a gem in the County.	Thank you for your interest and support to our parks. Parks is actively working on improvements to the picnic area, including shelter improvements, ADA accessibility improvements. Parks is also actively working to design and build a SEED Classroom facility within Black Hill Regional Park. We also have Black Hill RP on our natural surface trails project list, and we will be considering wayfinding with this effort.

Stand Alone Projects

Stand-alone projects that were completed through FY21 are as follows:

1. Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area

Projects that are in progress and should be substantially complete by the end of FY22 are listed below:

1. Hillandale Local Park
2. Josiah Henson Historic Park

Continuing Standalone Projects funded in the FY21-26 CIP

Project Name	Location	Description	Budget*	Status
Black Hill Regional Park: SEED Classroom	Boyds	Converting maintenance yard to an environmental-friendly educational site using the principles of Sustainable Education Every Day (SEED) Classroom design and construction.	$650,000	Design FY21 Construction FY22
Blair HS Field Renovations and Lights	Silver Spring	Renovation of two fields for multiple sports for both school use and community use. Two Phases: • Phase one - track field with improvements to include irrigation, drainage, grading, bermudagrass, portable goals and lights. • Phase two - multi-purpose field directly behind the school with improvements to include irrigation, grading, bermudagrass, softball infield improvements, portable goals and lights.	$2,900,000	Construction FY22-23
Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation	Silver Spring	Next phases of infrastructure work – Visitors Center & Conservatory (POR), renovations to the Formal Gardens, and facility planning for Propagation Area B of the maintenance area.	$1,700,000*	DesignFY22 Construction FY22-23
North Branch Trail	Rockville	Hiker-biker trail, 2.2 mi, through Lake Frank and the North Branch of Rock Creek	$4,672,000	Construction FY22-23

Project Name	Location	Description	Budget*	Status
Northwest Branch Recreation Park Athletic Area	Cloverly-Norwood	Phase II to include Lighting and irrigation for adult fields, playground, maintenance building, restroom building and two picnic shelters, sensory loop trail, landscaping and miscellaneous amenities.	$4,600,000	Design FY26 Construction is in the Beyond Six Years (FY27+)
Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park	Clarksburg	Expands the active recreation area including relocating the carousel from Wheaton Regional Park and providing supporting recreational amenities and parking to create a destination recreational area.	$8,200,000	Design ongoing Construction FY22-25
Power Line Trail	West County	State Grant-funded project to design, construct, and equip portions of the ultimate 13-mile paved and natural surface trail within the Pepco powerline corridor that connects South Germantown Recreational Park to Cabin John Regional Park as well as community and park connectors along the corridor.	$10,000,000	Design FY22 Construction FY23-25
S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field	Germantown	Adding the second cricket pitch envisioned as part of phase II of this overall project	$3,118,000	Design FY23 Construction FY24-25
Wheaton Regional Park Improvements	Wheaton	Renovations in the Shorefield House area.	$5,000,000	Funding shown Beyond Six Years (FY25+), Facility/concept plan for Shorefield Area approved June 2017

Unfunded Standalone Projects from FY21-26 CIP (candidates for inclusion in the FY23-28 CIP)

Project Name	Location	Description	Budget*	Status
Elm Street Urban Park	Bethesda	Renovation of an existing urban park, adds work to have been done by developer	$942,000	Funding shown Beyond Six Years (FY27+), Project Plan by former developer approved 2010
Warner Circle Special Park	Kensington	Renovation of historic buildings and surrounding park	$6,177,000	The Department is currently negotiating an adaptive reuse of the building. Funding of $4,952,000 shown Beyond Six Years (FY27+)

Potential New Stand-alone Projects (candidates for inclusion in the FY21-26 CIP)

Project Name	Location	Description	Budget*	Status
Long Branch Area Improvements	Silver Spring			

Level-of-Effort Projects

Below is a summary of level-of-effort projects including the range of funding levels over the six years of the FY21-26 CIP as well as what the funds are generally used for and some prioritization factors unique to the capital project. Note: All of the Criteria below are considered in addition to overall factors of:

- CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria
- Equity
- Providing Active Recreation in Urban Areas
- Alignment with PROS/EPS Plans
- Condition Assessment of Existing Infrastructure and Ensuring Public Safety

	FY21-26 per year (000)	**For**	**Prioritizing criteria**
Acquisition: Local Parks	$650	Acquisitions that serve county residents on a neighborhood or community basis	• Approved or adopted plans and policies • Opportunity, willing sellers • Program-based acquisition strategy • Demand for urban parks, recreation facilities and green open spaces
Acquisition: Non-Local Parks	$700-750	For non-local parkland acquisitions, including related costs for land surveys, appraisals, settlement expenses and other related acquisition costs	• Approved or adopted plans and policies • Opportunity, willing sellers • Program-based acquisition strategy • Demand for urban parks, recreation facilities and green open spaces
ADA Compliance: Local Parks	$750 - $880	Removes existing barriers and ensures that park facilities are built and maintained in	• PROS/EPS Area (Population Density) • Community Connections to Parks • Proximity to Public Transit • Unique vs. Recurring Amenities

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
		compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards	• Asset Types within Park
ADA Compliance: Non-Local Parks	$950-1,000	Removes existing barriers and ensures that park facilities are built and maintained in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards	• PROS/EPS Area (Population Density) • Access within Countywide Parks • Proximity to Public Transit • Unique vs. Recurring Amenities • Asset Types within Park
ALARF: M-NCPPC	$1000	To enable the Commission to acquire rights-of-way and other property needed for future public projects. All properties acquired with ALARF must first be shown on adopted area master plans as needed for future public use	• Approved or adopted plans and policies • Opportunity, willing sellers • Program-based acquisition strategy • Demand for urban parks, recreation facilities and green open spaces
Ballfield Initiatives	$1550-2525	Improves existing athletic fields, creates new fields, and converts field types to meets needs	• Athletic Field Strategic Plan • Prioritization with Operations staff • Safety Improvements • Permit data for highest utilization • Observations of informal use • Community demand based on sport type • MCPS Athletic Field renovation needs. • Countywide youth sports initiative
Bethesda Park Impact Payment	Varies	Acquisitions and development in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area	• Location in the Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan area • Recommendations as prioritized in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan • Park Development Needs

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
Cost Sharing: Local Parks	$75	Supports design, staff chargebacks, permitting, and construction activities associated with capital investments by outside entities on parkland	• Opportunity based
Cost Sharing: Non-Local Parks	$50	Supports design, staff chargebacks, permitting, and construction activities associated with capital investments by outside entities on parkland	• Opportunity based
Energy Conservation - Local Parks	$70-150	Supports efficiency upgrades in Parks	• Condition-based assessments • Age of equipment • Capacity to reduce energy consumption/greenhouse gas emissions • Opportunity to generate renewable energy •
Energy Conservation - Non-Local Parks	$90-200	Supports efficiency upgrades in Parks	• Condition-based assessments • Age of equipment • Capacity to reduce energy consumption/greenhouse gas emissions • Opportunity to generate renewable energy •
Enterprise Facilities' Improvements	varies	Improves existing and creates fee-based facilities	• Availability of funds and facility needs • Revenue forecasts
Facility Planning: Local Parks	$300-400	Concept design and facility planning of Local Parks	• Master Plan guidance or meet identified needs • Immediacy, Need, Efficiency • Age of Park
Facility Planning: Non-Local Parks	$250-300	Concept design and facility planning of Local Parks	• Master Plan guidance or meet identified needs • Immediacy, Need, Efficiency • Age of Park

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
Legacy Open Space	$1036-2641	To acquire or obtain easements or make fee-simple purchases on open-space lands of countywide significance	• Legacy Open Space Master Plan goals and objectives • Opportunity, willing sellers • Program-based acquisition strategy
Legacy Urban Space	$3000-4875	To acquire parkland to fill needs identified in the EPS Study Area using State of Maryland Program Open Space grants	• Addressing the largest public space deficits • Expected population growth and associated park needs • Opportunity, willing sellers • Program-based acquisition strategy • Demand for urban parks, recreation facilities and green open spaces
Mid-County Park Benefit Payments	varies	Acquisition of new parkland and the development of park facilities on newly acquired land to serve the White Flint, Grosvenor-Strathmore, and Rock Spring areas	• Location in the White Flint, Grosvenor-Strathmore, and Rock Spring areas • Recommended parks as prioritized in the White Flint, Grosvenor-Strathmore, and Rock Spring sector plans • Park Development Needs
Minor New Construction - Local Parks	$360-400	Provides new amenities within existing parks	• Meeting emerging trends • Addressing amenity deficits
Minor New Construction - Non-Local Parks	$620-800	Provides new amenities within existing parks	• Meeting emerging trends • Addressing amenity deficits
Park Refreshers	$2872-3900	Provides Local Park renovations and new amenities beyond capacity of PLAR and MNC PDFs	• Master Plan guidance or meet identified needs • Immediacy, Need, Efficiency • Age of Park

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement: Local Parks			
LP-Minor Renovation	$744-750	Rehabilitates and replaces all aging infrastructure and amenities	• Safety of patrons and staff • Age of infrastructure and Amenities • Emergency response to storm damage and other events • Improvements necessary for operation of existing facilities • Meet regulatory mandates
LP-Play Equipment	$1354-1700	Rehabilitates and replaces aging playgrounds and fixtures	• Performance measure checklist score • Age of equipment • Wood equipment treated with copper chromated arsenate • Safety Inspection reports
LP-Tennis and Multi-Use Courts	$396-500	Provides sports court renovations, retrofits, and conversions	• Condition-based assessments • Input from Park Planning & Operations staff • Lighted courts in poor condition • Need for repurposing to meet recreation needs/trends • Opportunity-based renovations for efficiency
LP-Resurfacing Parking Lots & Paths	$352-500	Renovates parking lots, entrance roads, access routes, and paved walkways	• Condition-based assessmentsAge of Infrastructure • Opportunity-based renovations for efficiency • Input from Operations staff • Usage, access, and safety
LP-Park Building Renovations	$246-500	Renovates Park Activity Buildings and other park structures	• Rental usage • Age of buildings/structures

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
			• Life safety issues
LP-Boundary Markings Local/Non-Local	$40	Survey work to delineate park boundaries	• Department identified survey needs
Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement: NL Parks			
NL-Minor Renovation	$2263-2613	Rehabilitates and replaces all aging infrastructure and amenities	• Safety of patrons and staff • Age of infrastructure and Amenities • Emergency response to storm damage and other events • Improvements necessary for operation of existing facilities • Meet regulatory mandates
NL-Play Equipment	$445-500	Rehabilitates and replaces aging playgrounds and fixtures	• Performance measure checklist score • Age of equipment • Wood equipment treated with copper chromated arsenate • Safety Inspection reports
NL-Tennis and Multi-Use Courts	$319-400	Provides sports court renovations, retrofits, and conversions	• Input from Park Planning & Operations staff • Lighted courts in poor condition • Need for repurposing to meet recreation needs/trends • Opportunity-based renovations for efficiency • Condition-based assessments

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
NL-Resurfacing Parking Lots & Paths	$584-1000	Routine renovations of parking lots, entrance roads, and paved walkways that are not part of the hiker-biker trail system	• Condition-based assessments • Prioritization with Operations staff • Roadways higher priority than parking lots • Equity
NL-Park Building Renovations	$369-500	Renovates park buildings and other structures	• Usage • Age of buildings/structures • Life safety issues
NL-Boundary Markings Local/Non-Local	$30	Survey work to delineate park boundaries	• Department identified survey needs
Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds & Lakes	$950 $1200	Provides water quality enhancements and environmental restoration	• Chronic waterway erosion and storm events • SWM treatment of facilities built prior to regulations • Watershed assessments • Asset/infrastructure protection • NPDES MS4 impervious surface credit equivalent potential • Opportunity-based renovations for efficiency
Restoration of Historic Structures	$450-635	Restores historic sites and structures and provides for community access and interpretation	• 2006 Strategic Plan – top 20 projects and inventory • 2009 Cultural Resources Asset Priority Index
Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements	$1050-1100	Appropriation to receive non-agency contributions	• Opportunity based
Stream Protection: SVP	$950-2900	Provides water quality enhancements and environmental restoration	• Chronic waterway erosion and storm events • SWM treatment of facilities built prior to regulations

	FY21-26 per year (000)	For	Prioritizing criteria
			• Watershed assessments • Asset/infrastructure protection • NPDES MS4 impervious surface credit equivalent potential Opportunity-based renovations for efficiency
Trails: Hard Surface Design & Construction	$300	Creates community connections to existing trails, trail signage, and trail amenities	• Trail Connectors needs assessments • Improved connectivity between park amenities
Trails: Hard Surface Renovation	$645-1050	Renovates hard surface trails	• Age of pavement • Trail usage • Drainage and ADA improvement needs
Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation	$500-800	Creates access to natural, undeveloped parkland and natural resource-based recreation	• 2016 County Wide Park Trails Plan • 2018 Strategic Plan • Drainage and ADA improvement needs
Urban Park Elements	$235-600	Provides new amenities within urban park settings	• Input from Park Planning & Operations staff • Need for repurposing to meet recreation needs/trends • Opportunity-based renovations for efficiency • Population density
Vision Zero	$500-700	Creates improvements to trails, roads, access routes to enhance safety and calm traffic	• Trail/road usage • Input from Park Planning, Park Police, & Operations staff • Traffic Calming goals • Ongoing safety concerns