

REVIEW OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S FY23 CAPITAL BUDGET AND FY23-28 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM



Description

Planning staff annually reviews the County Executive's Recommended Capital Budget and transportation Capital Improvements Program and prepares recommendations for Planning Board consideration. Approved Planning Board comments are then transmitted to the County Council.

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SUMMARY

- Transportation funding in this Recommended Capital budget and 6-year CIP is significantly larger, primarily due to anticipated funding sources from Op Lanes Maryland Transit funding and state and federal aid planned for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects.
- The advancement of two major Bus Rapid Transit projects for MD 355 Central and Veirs Mill Road are major changes in this Recommended Capital Budget for transportation.
- The Capital Crescent Trail tunnel and Elm Street Park improvements to complete this subsurface trail connection are not funded in this Recommended Capital Budget to meet opening day estimates for the Purple Line (FY26).

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INTRODUCTION

The County Executive published his Recommended FY23 Capital Budget and the FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) on January 17, 2022. The document may be found at: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OMB/Resources/Files/omb/pdfs/fy23/ciprec/FY23_Recommended_Capital_Budget.pdf.

A summary of the recommended changes to project expenditures is provided in Attachment A to this report. Staff has analyzed the recommended budgets for transportation projects. In this report, staff has noted projects that have significant changes in budget or in schedule, and projects that the County Executive recommends being advanced or delayed that are important to the fulfillment of adopted master plans.

The Planning Board is asked to review staff comments on the capital budget and CIP and transmit them to the County Council.

COUNTY EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDED FY23 CAPITAL BUDGET AND SIX-YEAR CIP SUMMARY

The County Executive has developed a recommended FY23 Capital Budget and FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The overall FY23 Capital Budget/cumulative project funding totals \$16.86 billion of which transportation projects total \$4.289 billion (125 projects). This is the top funding category in the Capital Budget, representing 25.4 percent of the total budget. The recommended FY23-28 CIP totals \$5.06 billion. Within the recommended CIP, transportation projects total \$1.497 billion (29.6 percent of the recommended CIP).

A summary of the transportation capital budget by improvement category is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Recommended FY23 Transportation CIP Budget Summary

Improvement Category	Total Projects	Active Projects	Total Budget (000s)	6-Year CIP (000s)	Beyond 6 Years (000s)
Bike/Ped	32	26	\$652,793	\$268,289	\$110,879
Bridges	15	11	\$195,746	\$74,163	\$33,395
Highway Maintenance	8	8	\$693,692	\$241,858	\$0
Mass Transit	24	17	\$1,472,591	\$654,978	\$130
Parking	8	6	\$91,776	\$45,880	\$0
Roads	26	13	\$753,787	\$107,106	\$301,093
Traffic Improvements	12	11	\$428,711	\$105,702	\$100,000
Total Transportation	125	92	\$4,289,096	\$1,497,976	\$545,497

Out of the total recommended funding in the six-year CIP, Mass Transit has the highest share of the transportation budget (34 percent), Roads (18 percent), Highway Maintenance (16 percent), and Bike/Ped (15 percent).

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE’S 6-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Compared to the approved FY21-26 six-year CIP, the County Executive has recommended a FY23-28 six-year CIP that is \$740.58 million more (17.2 percent). This includes an increase of \$418.988 million (39 percent) for transportation projects.

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION-RELATED CHANGES IN THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDED FY23 CAPITAL BUDGET & 6-YEAR CIP

The County Executive’s recommended CIP includes several transportation projects with major funding changes due to advancement of these projects out of facility planning, introduction of new funding sources needed to advance a project, acceleration of funding, shifting of funding to later fiscal years and Vision Zero priorities. A total of 32 projects were closed out (completed) between the FY22 and FY23 budgets and six new transportation projects were added to the FY23 budget. The new projects are shown below in Table 3.

The following is a discussion of some key transportation project changes. With each, staff has noted the priority ranking (Top 100 transportation priorities) as approved by the Planning Board on October 21, 2021 and forwarded to the County Executive on November 1, 2021 (see Attachment B).

Table 3: New FY23 Transportation Projects

Project Name	Total Budget (000s)	6-Year CIP (000s)	Beyond 6 Years (000s)
Bus Rapid Transit: MD 355 South/North (P502309)	\$9,700	\$9,700	\$0
Facility Planning: Mass Transit (P502308)	\$3,065	\$2,935	\$130
Sandy Spring Bikeway (P502306)	\$200	\$200	\$0
Tuckerman Lane Sidewalk (P502302)	\$537	\$537	\$0
US 29 Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements (P502304)	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0
Transportation Feasibility Studies (P502303)	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
Total New Transportation Projects	\$21,002	\$20,872	\$130

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN THE PLANNING BOARD’S PRIORITY LIST

Major transportation projects included in the County Executive’s recommended CIP that have been prioritized by the Planning Board are discussed below in priority order:

- 1. Bus Rapid Transit: MD 355 Central (P502005):** This CIP project was renamed from “Bus Rapid Transit: MD 355” and now focuses on the portion of the proposed MD 355 BRT improvements between Montgomery College – Germantown (or Germantown Transit Center) and Montgomery College – Rockville. For the total project, \$290.37 million was added to this project. During the CIP period, \$302.87 million is budgeted. Construction of this section of the MD 355 BRT service will be completed by FY28. Funding sources for this project include current revenue, impact tax monies, some state aid (\$6 million), and recordation tax premium funds, but the bulk of the funding for this project is expected to come from two sources: 1) federal aid (\$158.86 million), and 2) Op Lanes (formerly the I-495/I-270 Managed Lanes project) Maryland Transit funding (\$131.5 million). This project was identified as the top transportation CIP priority by the Planning Board.

- 2. Bus Rapid Transit: Veirs Mill Road (P501913):** \$74.8 million is recommended to be added to the 6-year CIP for this bus rapid transit project proposed between Downtown Wheaton and Montgomery College – Rockville. The BRT line will complete Final Design in FY24 and be fully constructed by FY27. Funding sources for this project include current revenue, impact tax monies, federal aid (\$42.58 million), and Op Lanes Maryland Transit funding (\$28.47 million). This project was identified as transportation CIP priority #2 by the Planning Board. It is important to note that this design is for the County Council-selected Alternative 2.5, not the Master Plan vision (Alternative 3) recommended in the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan.
- 3. Capital Crescent Trail (P501316):** The County Executive’s 6-year CIP defers the previously approved FY25 and FY26 funding of \$43.1 million outside the current 6-year CIP, resulting in no CIP funding for this project in the last four out years (FY25-28) of the 6-year CIP. This funding is needed to complete the Capital Crescent Trail tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue and improvements at Elm Street Park to fully connect the Capital Crescent Trail. Beyond FY28, a total of \$55.58 million (inclusive of \$43.1 million identified above) would be needed to complete this project. The Recommended CIP also identifies that state aid (\$21 million – funding program undefined) would be sought by FY25 to help fund the completion of this project; however, this state aid is shown in the Beyond FY28 column. This project was identified by the Planning Board as transportation CIP priority #4.
- 4. Forest Glen Passageway (P501911):** The overall budget for this project was increased in May 2021 to \$40.55 million. The County Executive is proposing to spend \$11.123 million more during the 6-year CIP. Construction is anticipated to begin in FY26 and be complete by FY28. This project will be funded with GO bonds. This project was identified as transportation CIP priority #7 by the Planning Board.
- 5. White Flint Metro Station Northern Entrance (P501914):** The project funding and scope was changed in FY22. The total project is estimated at \$34.8 million. The county is working with WMATA on redevelopment of the White Flint Metro Station site and will look for opportunities to leverage private sector funding for these enhancements. This project was identified by the Planning Board as transportation CIP priority #8.
- 6. Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities (P500119):** \$4.218 million is proposed to be added to the overall budget for this project of which an additional \$663,000 is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP. The budget and construction schedule have been extended from FY22 to FY25. Reasons for these changes include higher than anticipated construction costs for Phase 2 of the Woodmont Avenue cycle track and Phase 2 of the Montgomery Avenue cycle track. These projects were identified as transportation CIP priorities #9 and #12 by the Planning Board.

- 7. Great Seneca Science Corridor Transportation Improvements (P502202):** No funding changes have been proposed in the Recommended 6-Year CIP, however, more detail on the project Phasing was provided in the project description form (pdf). This project implements the Great Seneca Transit Network that has been developed by MCDOT in response to the continued delay of the Corridor Cities Transitway and in support of the Corridor Forward: I-270 Transit Plan and the Great Seneca Science Center Corridor Minor Master Plan Amendment, Phase 2. Phase 1A is the planned implementation of two transit services, called the Pink and Lime lines. The Pink line links Shady Grove Metrorail station to the Life Science Center near Shady Grove Hospital, and the Lime line using I-370 from the Shady Grove Metrorail station to Rio, Crown Farm, and the heart of the Life Science Center. Phase 1A of this project remains on schedule to be constructed in FY24; however, Phase 1B of this project has not been scheduled/funded to-date. In addition, a \$1 million project appropriation (cost sharing for project implementation) is on hold pending a Memorandum of Understanding with the cities of Gaithersburg and Rockville. With its connection to Corridor Forward and its re-envisioned Corridor Cities Transitway, this project relates to the Board's transportation CIP priority #20 to advance transit near the Corridor Cities.
- 8. Fenton Street Cycle track (P502001):** \$6.7 million is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP for this bike project in Downtown Silver Spring on Fenton Street between Planning Place and King Street. This project, which is anticipated to be constructed by FY24, was identified in transportation CIP priorities #23 and #25 by the Planning Board.
- 9. Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements – Wheaton CBD (P502002):** \$4.6 million is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP for this project. This project budget includes the design and construction of the proposed two-way separated bike lanes on Amherst Street between Arcola Avenue and Winhdam Lane. These improvements were identified by the Planning Board as transportation CIP priorities #24 and #36.
- 10. Sidewalk Program Minor Projects (P506747):** \$7.2 million is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP for this ongoing level-of-effort program. This program was identified as transportation CIP priority #33 by the Planning Board.
- 11. Observation Drive Extended (P501507):** The six-year CIP for this project is proposed to be increased by \$56.07 million. This amount would fund the Phase 1 design, land acquisition, and construction (construction would begin in FY27). Phase 1 is the connection of Observation Drive between Waters Discovery Lane and Little Seneca Parkway and the completion/improvement of Little Seneca Parkway between MD 355 and Observation Drive. Phase 2 is the future extension of Observation Drive up to the future Clarksburg Bypass/Roberts Tavern Road. Beyond FY28, the remaining funding needed to complete this project will be \$45.47 million. This project (Phase 1 only) was identified by the Planning Board as the #38 transportation CIP priority.

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS NOT IN THE PLANNING BOARD'S PRIORITY LIST

There are many notable transportation projects included in the County Executive's recommended CIP that Planning staff is generally supportive of, and while they did not make the Planning Board's Top 100, they are worthwhile efforts. These projects include ongoing level-of-effort work programs, cost sharing with MDOT SHA projects, first mile/last mile transit-supportive programs as well as some notable older projects that have already advanced through Mandatory Referral.

- 1. Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements – Veirs Mill/Randolph (P502003):** \$11.59 million is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP for this Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area (BiPPA) project. The increase was proposed with the expansion of the project scope to include the entire BiPPA area. Construction is expected to occur in FY25-FY27. This project expansion was recommended by the Planning Board two years ago in the Review of the County Executive's FY21 Capital Budget and FY21-26 CIP on page 11 (See Attachment C).
- 2. RideOn Bus Fleet (P500821):** \$86.23 million is proposed to be added to this ongoing level-of-effort program, of which \$56.14 million is proposed within the 6-year CIP. A significant percentage of this large cost increase is due to the planned acquisition of zero-emission buses.
- 3. Sidewalk and Curb Replacement (P508182):** \$8.54 million is proposed to be added to this ongoing level-of-effort program.
- 4. Facility Planning: Mass Transit (P502308):** This new program provides for planning and preliminary engineering for new and reconstructed mass transit projects under consideration for inclusion in the CIP. \$3.065 million is funded for this ongoing program.
- 5. Transportation Feasibility Studies (P502303):** \$1.5 million is included in the CIP for this ongoing program to quickly identify solutions for advancing transportation facilities to design and construction. Projects selected for inclusion in this program will not require detailed alternatives analysis.
- 6. Goldsboro Road Sidewalk and Bikeway (P501917):** \$12.363 million is proposed to be added to this bike/ped project. This amount includes full design, right-of-way acquisition, drainage improvements and construction starting in FY27. Beyond FY28, the remaining funded needed to complete this project will be \$6.34 million.
- 7. Bowie Mill Road Bikeway (P502108):** \$9.995 million is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP for this bikeway project. This would cover final design, land acquisition, and two years out of a three-year construction phase within this 6-year period. Beyond FY28, the remaining funded needed to complete this project will be \$7.8 million.

8. **Falls Road East Side Hiker/Biker Path (P500905):** \$9.4 million is proposed to be added to the 6-year CIP for this bike project. No funds are scheduled until FY27 and FY28. This project has been deferred repeatedly over the past several years.
9. **US 29 Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements (P502304):** \$6 million is budgeted for this new project to fund the design and construction of pedestrian and bicycle improvements to Flash stations along the US 29 corridor.
10. **Oak Drive/ MD 27 Sidewalk (P501908):** \$5.87 million is proposed to be added to this sidewalk project. The project would be fully constructed by FY28 with this recommended allocation.
11. **Bradley Boulevard (MD 191) Improvements (P501733):** \$5.87 million is proposed to be added to this bikeway project. The project would be fully constructed by FY27 with this recommended amount.
12. **Sandy Spring Bikeway (P502306):** \$200,000 is budgeted for FY23 only to allow cost sharing with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration for the final design and construction of a ten-foot-wide sidepath on the north side of MD 108 from Doctor Bird Road to Norwood Road.
13. **Metropolitan Branch Trail (P501110):** There are no funding changes for this project, however, this project has been delayed for the past several years largely due to delayed approval from WMATA, CSX, and Montgomery Preservation (MPI). Phase 1 construction was completed in 2018. Phase 2 design and property acquisition was completed in FY22. Utility relocations will be completed in FY22. Construction is scheduled to start in FY22 and be completed in 30 months (FY24). Due to bid procurement rules, the project is being re-bid, as only one contractor submitted, so contract award and construction initiation is likely delayed by 6 months (still FY24 hopefully).

MAJOR PROJECT-RELATED CONCERNS NOT ADDRESSED IN THE CIP

1. **Bike Racks:** Based on a 2016 survey, over 8,600 bicycle parking spaces are needed at public schools, public libraries, and recreation centers; the vast majority are needed at schools. The recommendation in the 2019-2020 Bicycle Master Plan Biennial Monitoring Report is to upgrade deficient bike racks at all public libraries and recreation centers over the next two years and expand and upgrade bicycle parking availability at all public schools over a ten-year period. As shown in Table 4 below, the estimated cost to upgrade and expand bicycle parking at these public facilities is approximately \$3.6 million.

Table 4: Estimated Cost to Address Bicycle Parking Needs at Public Facilities

Facility Type	Bicycle Racks Needed	Estimated Cost
Elementary Schools	3,831	\$1,566,000
Middle Schools	1,892	\$788,000
High Schools	2,546	\$1,188,000
Public Libraries	158	\$18,000
Recreation Centers	228	\$30,000
Total	8,655	\$3,590,000

Source: Bicycle Master Plan Biennial Monitoring Report – 2019-2020, Table 14, page 47.

- Aspen Hill BiPPA:** In 2019, the Planning Board requested the creation of a new BiPPA project to address the deficiencies identified in the Aspen Hill Vision Zero Study, conducted by the Planning Department. This action has not been added to the CIP.

RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

Staff is generally supportive of the County Executive’s Recommended Capital Budget and FY23-FY28 CIP, but recommends that the following comments be transmitted to the County Council:

- Capital Crescent Trail (P501316):** It is critical that this project be completed to coincide with the completion of the Purple Line (now scheduled for FY26). The proposed delay in this project’s schedule beyond FY28 is unacceptable to the Planning Board. Given the uncertainty of state aid, we recommend that budget adjustments to other lower-priority projects be made to fully fund this project to ensure that it will be constructed by FY26.
- Bike Racks:** Create a new program to upgrade deficient bike racks at all public libraries and recreation centers over the next two years and expand and upgrade bicycle parking availability at all public schools over a ten-year period. The total cost of this effort is approximately \$3.6 million, as identified in the 2019-2020 Bicycle Master Plan Biennial Monitoring Report.
- Aspen Hill Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area project:** A new project should be created and funded to implement the safety deficiencies/improvement needs recommended in the Aspen Hill Vision Zero Study, conducted by the Planning Department in 2019.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Expenditure Details

Attachment B – 2021 Transportation Priorities

Attachment C – Comments on Recommended FY21 Capital Budget and 6-Year CIP