



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

MCPB  
Item # 11  
February 10, 2011

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** February 2, 2011

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Dan Hardy, Chief *DKH*  
Functional Policy and Planning Division

**FROM:** Larry Cole: 301-495-4528, for the Montgomery County Planning  
Department *LC*

**SUBJECT:** County Executive's Recommended FY12 Adjustments to the  
FY11-FY16 Montgomery County Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

**RECOMMENDATION: Transmit comments to the County Council**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Planning Board an overview of the County Executive's Recommended FY12 Adjustments to the FY11-FY16 CIP and an opportunity to provide your comments to the County Council. *The Recommended CIP may be found on the County's website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ombtml.asp?url=/content/omb/FY12/ciprec/index.asp>.* Note that this overview is exclusive of M-NCPPC projects, which the Parks Department discussed separately with the Board on December 6, 2010. Non-M-NCPPC projects that affect Parks are discussed in this memorandum.

Staff recommends the Planning Board transmit the following comments to the County Council. The details for each item are shown later in this memorandum.

1. **Montgomery County Public Schools:** A commitment to additional funding, through a generic PDF form, should be provided to avoid four school clusters being placed in residential moratorium in Fiscal Year 2012: Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Richard Montgomery, Northwest, and Northwood.
2. **North County Maintenance Depot:** We support the search for an alternative site for this facility outside the sensitive Ten Mile Creek watershed. Our staff continues to work with County Executive staff to identify potential locations that will allow the county to expand bus operations.

3. **White Flint Redevelopment Program, White Flint District East: Transportation, White Flint District West: Transportation, and White Flint Traffic Analysis and Mitigation:** We support the funding of these projects as a comprehensive way to ensure the orderly development of the White Flint area. Development of a bike sharing system should be included in the Traffic Analysis and Mitigation project to help achieve the Sector Plan’s modal split goals.
4. **Platt Ridge Drive Extended:** The funding for right-of-way acquisition should be included in this PDF. Compensation to M-NCPPC for any parkland taken for this project will be used to purchase replacement parkland.
5. **Facility Planning: Bridges:** We recommend adding the following language to the PDF: “For bridges crossing waterways, designs will evaluate natural channel conditions and include appropriate measures for stabilization in coordination with DEP. Individual bridge designs will be compatible with nearby historic and aesthetic resources.”
6. **Facility Planning: Storm Drains:** We recommend adding the following language to the PDF: “Opportunities for storm water management improvement will be incorporated, where feasible, into drainage solutions.”
7. **Streetlighting:** This project should include approximately \$500K in funds for the replacement of streetlights along Jackson Road formerly maintained by the Department of Parks.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

### **Background**

The County Executive’s Recommended CIP is an off-year amendment to the FY11-FY16 CIP rather than a new “full” CIP – only seven new projects are proposed to be added. Several projects and programs have had their budgets cut to offset the shortfall in revenue.

Our analysis below includes the new projects listed in the Recommended CIP, and those projects noted as having significant changes to their budgets and/or schedules that we believe would be of interest to the Board. The cost of the new projects is noted, as well as the change in funding for the existing projects. Our comments on these projects, including additional language that we believe should be added to the CIP changes, are noted.

The subprograms and projects are listed below in the order they appear in the Executive’s recommended CIP.

## New Projects

### White Flint

Three new projects, fully funded through the White Flint Special Taxing District, are proposed to complement the proposed development in the White Flint Sector Plan area:

[White Flint Redevelopment Program](#): This project would cost \$2.9M. It covers plans, studies, and analysis necessary to implement the extensive public infrastructure recommended in the Sector Plan, and would include legal services, property appraisals, and other services necessary to coordinate infrastructure improvements with development in a way that maximizes the benefit achieved with the taxes collected from the White Flint Special Taxing District and minimizes the expense to the public.

[White Flint District East: Transportation](#) This project would cost \$1.2M. It covers the preliminary engineering for portions of Executive Boulevard Extended and Nebel Street in the Sector Plan area that would be built as CIP projects. These roads will serve as the “eastern workaroud” for Rockville Pike reconstruction during Phase II of the Sector Plan.

[White Flint Traffic Analysis and Mitigation](#) This project would cost \$1.5M and would cover the operational aspects of managing traffic in the redevelopment area, including cut-through traffic monitoring and mitigation (\$0.3M), intersection improvements, (\$0.7M) and development of programs to achieve the Sector Plan’s modal split goals (\$0.5M).

We recommend that development of a bike sharing system in the White Flint area be incorporated in this project. This system would be similar to, or an expansion of, the Capital Bikeshare system in Washington DC and Arlington. The County has explored development of such a system both independently and through participation in the unsuccessful MWCOG TIGER II grant application during Fall 2010. We believe that such a system would also be appropriate in Bethesda and Silver Spring, where we already have higher levels of bike usage. Bike sharing stations could become a logical component in transportation mitigation programs for developers in these areas, although the County must first establish a basic and successful system upon which the private sector could expand. While the project budget would likely not be sufficient to actually implement a successful bikesharing project (estimated at about \$300K for any one of the three candidate areas), it can provide the functional, legal and administrative groundwork for the project.

We also note that, similar to the North Bethesda Transportation Management District (TMD) that already exists for White Flint, the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan requires that the establishment of a Greater Shady Grove TMD as part of the Stage 1 prerequisites for development. Funding for transportation monitoring and mode share achievement in both the North Bethesda and Greater Shady Grove TMDs is an integral part of the staging element in both master plans. Staff will address the

importance and need for this funding as part of separate comments to the Board on the operating budget later this Spring.

[EOB & Judicial Center Traffic Circle Repair](#): These repairs would cost \$400K.

[1301 Picard Loading Dock](#): These repairs at the Health and Human Services facility would cost \$648K.

[Platt Ridge Drive Extended](#) This project would cost \$3.7M. MCDOT presented their Spring Valley Traffic Study to the Planning Board on September 16, 2010. A description of the project may be found on our webpage at <http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/brac/brac8.shtm>. During your roundtable discussion, the Planning Board stated that Alternative 3 Option 2 (extending Woodlawn Road to Platt Ridge Road) and both options for Alternative 4 (extending Woodlawn Road or Montrose Driveway to the North Chevy Chase Local Park entrance driveway) would cause too great an adverse impact to the park and should not be studied further. The Board agreed to allow the study to proceed with extending Platt Ridge Road to Montrose Driveway through North Chevy Chase Local Park, as well as the installation of an interim traffic signal at Jones Bridge Road/Spring Valley Drive, and directed Parks staff to participate in the study. This project would design the road extension, and would construct it if MCDOT determines that the interim traffic signal, which they will be installing this year, is not working adequately.

The PDF includes the statement, “Right-of-way for this project will be dedicated by the M-NCPPC or purchased through ALARF funding.” We believe that the Commission should be compensated for the value of the land needed for this project so that we may purchase replacement parkland. Advance Land Acquisition Revolving Fund (ALARF) funding is generally used in advance of a project being individually listed in the CIP. We believe that the right-of-way cost for the project should be included in the PDF for this project.

[Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center](#): This feasibility study, on which the Department of Parks has been working closely with DGS, would cost \$250K. The primary concern for Parks at this point is finding replacement land for the 2.3 acres of parkland which now support the Wheaton Community Center, which is proposed to be conveyed to the County to allow this project to proceed. Several possible replacement sites have been preliminarily identified by staff and will be discussed with the Board at a future date. Any conveyance of real estate in this regard will require the final approval of the Planning Board and the full Commission. This project replaces the former [Wheaton-Rafferty](#) project to renovate and expand the Rafferty Center on-site.

#### **FY11-16 Increase/Decrease Existing Projects – Amendments**

[White Flint District West: Transportation](#): This project to design and construct several projects in the White Flint area was added in the last CIP but without construction

funding; \$98.6M in funding is proposed to be added. This project is also fully funded by the White Flint Special Taxing District.

Facility Planning: Bridges: \$596K in funding would be added to this program to add studies for the rehabilitation of Brink Road Bridge No. M-0064 over Great Seneca Creek and Spring Street Bridge No. M-0078 over the CSX and Metro tracks.

Under the “OTHER” Section of the PDF, we recommend adding the following language: “For bridges crossing waterways, designs will evaluate natural channel conditions and include appropriate measures for stabilization in coordination with DEP. Individual bridge designs will be compatible with nearby historic and aesthetic resources.”

Silver Spring Transit Center: \$3.0M in additional funding is needed to cover unexpected costs from utility relocations and foundation construction problems, and the \$200K cost of building out the transit commuter store.

North County Maintenance Depot: This project has pushed back four years to reflect the time needed to evaluate alternative sites. The Planning Board has recommended that the site identified in the CIP has the potential for significant risk to the sensitive Ten Mile Creek stream headwaters. Planning staff has worked with the Executive site selection committee and with the DGS staff to identify and research other sites. Expansion of bus service, especially in the northern part of the county will require a facility be located in the near future. Selection of an alternative site may require significant additional costs and/or a less-than-ideal facility design. We note that while an expansion of the fleet of Ride-On buses cannot be accomplished until this facility is built, the current budget is so constrained that even the replacement of buses is being delayed.

Facility Planning: Storm Drains: This program would be reduced by \$35K. Under the “OTHER” Section of this PDF, we recommend adding the following language: “Opportunities for storm water management improvement will be incorporated, where feasible, into drainage solutions.”

It is important that stormwater be treated where possible, in addition to being conveyed away from areas with drainage or erosion problems. Not all locations will be suitable given specific conditions, but treatment options should be explored as part of the solution.

### **FY11-16 Funding Shifts and Reallocations - Other Changes**

State Transportation Participation: \$4.4M in funding would be added to this program. As was noted during the Board’s discussion of the County’s priorities for State transportation projects, the County has been contributing an increasing amount of funds to projects on State highways and transit projects in an effort to reduce congestion and increase mobility.

[Snouffer School Road North](#): \$16.8M in funding is proposed to be added to this project to design, reconstruct, and widen 0.6-mile of roadway. The PDF was added in the last CIP but without construction funding. This project would support the relocation of the Public Service Training Academy and Montgomery County Public Schools Food facility to the Webb Tract, as well as support additional development. The proposed road widening and associated eight-foot shared use path on the north side of the road will facilitate access to the proposed relocation of the Parks' maintenance facilities as well as to Green Conservation Park, which is located to the east of Webb Tract.

### Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

Three new school construction projects are proposed at a total cost of \$80M: [Whetstone ES Addition](#) (in Gaithersburg Vicinity), [Clarksburg Cluster ES](#), and [Clarksburg/Damascus MS](#). A serious need for additional school capacity exists in other areas however.

The new school enrollment projections in the *Superintendent's Recommended FY2012 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY2011-2016 Capital Improvements Program* indicate a significant impact on the school test portion of the county's Subdivision Staging Policy. **These enrollment projections could result in four school clusters being placed in residential moratorium in Fiscal Year 2012: Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Richard Montgomery, Northwest, and Northwood.**

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) have experienced significant enrollment increases for the third straight year. Since 2007-08, enrollment has increased by 6,713 students. MCPS states that this enrollment growth is the result of increases in county resident births, movement into the system of students from nonpublic schools, and a significant reduction in the number of households – and therefore students – moving out of Montgomery County.

In the recent past, when a school cluster was projected to go into residential moratorium, the County Council included a commitment to fund the needed capacity projects through adoption of a generic project description form that provided sufficient capacity to keep the cluster below the 120 percent utilization level. Staff recommends that the County Council take the same approach now and add generic projects that fund enough capacity to prevent the four clusters from entering moratorium and thus avoid the potential for moratoria that could influence the economic health of these areas.

### **Other Projects**

While DOT's [Streetlighting PDF](#) is not proposed to be amended, we have a particular project that we would like to make sure is included in this level-of-effort PDF.

Parks staff met with DOT staff in late Fall 2008 and corresponded in writing in July 2009 to discuss the condition of the street lighting in the public right-of-way of Jackson Road in Martin Luther King Recreational Park. Parks has been maintaining these lights for

many years, and they have reached the end of their service life. The pedestrian sidewalks along Jackson Road provide connections from the neighborhood to White Oak Middle School, Jackson Road Elementary School, Martin Luther King Aquatic Center and Recreational Park, and the regional Paint Branch Hiker-Biker Trail.

Parks had completed construction documents for the replacement of these lights in Fall 2008 and was prepared to fund their replacement. In Parks' coordination with the Department of Transportation, we learned that DOT standards for lighting are different from that of the Department of Parks, and that ***DOT's preference was for Parks to turn the project over to the County for implementation rather than to reimburse Parks for the project.*** We recommend that this project be added to DOT's Streetlighting PDF if it has not been done already. Parks' estimated construction costs for the roadway lighting in 2008 were approximately \$500,000. Parks staff understand that DOT needs to determine where this project falls within county-wide priorities.

The Department of Parks continually receives public complaints and service requests to repair these lights, which go dark frequently due to problems with the conduit below grade. Parks' electrical shop has spent many hours on repairs and can no longer continue to support the maintenance of these lights, which is why the project was high in priority for the Department of Parks. In the interest of public cooperation, Parks continued to maintain the lighting until June 30, 2010, with a year advance notice to DOT. At that point in time, it began directing all service calls to the County, since these lights are DOT's responsibility. Parks also expects the County to take over the energy costs. The Department of Parks is interested in assisting the County to assure a smooth transition, and recommends that this project be given a high priority in DOT's capital program.