





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

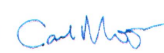
MCPB Agenda Item
July 9, 2015

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 2, 2015

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mike Riley, Director, Department of Parks 
Mitra Pedoeem, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks 
Michael Ma, Acting Chief, Park Development Division (PDD)

FROM: Carl Morgan, CIP Manager, PDD 

SUBJECT: Strategy for Preparing the FY17-22 Parks Capital Improvements Program

Staff Recommendation

Obtain guidance from the Planning Board on evaluation criteria, goals and priorities for the Parks FY17-22 Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Background

Staff developed an internal timeline for preparing the FY17-22 CIP based on the process utilized by the Commission in prior years. The timeline includes several sessions with the Planning Board over this summer and fall for the preparation of the FY17-22 CIP, including one strategy session July 9, another strategy session on July 30, and two work sessions on September 3 and September 24 with a proposed adoption session on October 8. The Board's Proposed FY17-22 CIP must be transmitted to the County Executive by November 1.

In this strategy session, staff will present CIP evaluation criteria and the evaluation process, expenditure categories, testimony received at the CIP Public Forum, and what to expect regarding future funding capacity.

Board Guidance on the Currently Adopted FY15-20 CIP

In 2005, the Board approved certain criteria for staff to follow in developing the FY07-12 CIP. The Board confirmed the same criteria for development of the CIPs to follow for FY09-14, FY11-16, FY13-18, and

FY15-20. The criteria provide general guidance in evaluating the priority of projects placed within the CIP and are listed below:

Planning Board Evaluation Criteria:

1. Immediacy:

- The project repairs or replaces facilities necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- The project preserves natural, cultural or historic resources that might otherwise be lost or degraded if prompt action is not taken.
- The project upgrades facilities to comply with current code requirements and laws.
- The timing of the project is dependent on coordination with related projects of other County agencies or interest groups.
- The project is included in the first phase of a master plan.

2. Need:

- The project is already programmed in the CIP and is therefore already promised to a community.
- The project provides facilities to an under-served geographic area.
- The project provides facilities to an under-served population group.
- The geographic distribution of proposed projects is equitable.
- The project provides facilities to serve unmet needs countywide.
- The project serves a need identified by the surrounding community.

3. Efficiency:

- The project increases revenue, results in cost savings, and/or improves operational efficiency.
- The project leverages an opportunity, such as a partnership, contribution, donation or grant.
- The project has a high cost/benefit ratio by serving a large number of people for a reasonable cost.
- The project prevents further degradation of existing facilities which could be costly to repair later.

All candidate projects must be consistent with the Department's mission and be supported by adopted studies, plans and/or policies. Candidate projects meeting several criteria would generally receive higher priority than those meeting only one or two. CIP Projects are based not only on these criteria, but also several other factors that are discussed later in this memo.

Staff request that the Board determine if these criteria are to be confirmed for the FY17-22 CIP and if there are any modifications or addition that the Board would like to make.

Additional Areas of Focus

Under the direction of Planning Board Chair, several of the Board's priorities related to parks include

- Activating urban parks
- Increasing capacity of athletic fields and facilities for active recreation
- Enhancing and expanding the parks' world class trail network

Parks staff meets regularly with the Chair to discuss implementing these priorities in the work program. Other areas of focus as reported in the Department's Semi-Annual Report include:

- Parks and Facility Maintenance
- Sustainability Initiatives
- *Archeology and History-Based Programming
- *Corporate Sponsorship Program/Montgomery Parks Foundation
- Community Gardens
- Security Software Databases for Park Police
- *Deer Management
- Capital Improvements Program Projects Implementation
- Graphic Design and Web Redevelopment
- *ActiveNet

*Non-CIP related, but the entire priority list is shown for reference.

The CIP is an opportunity to express commitment to these priorities and staff will consider these priorities while developing recommendations for the CIP.

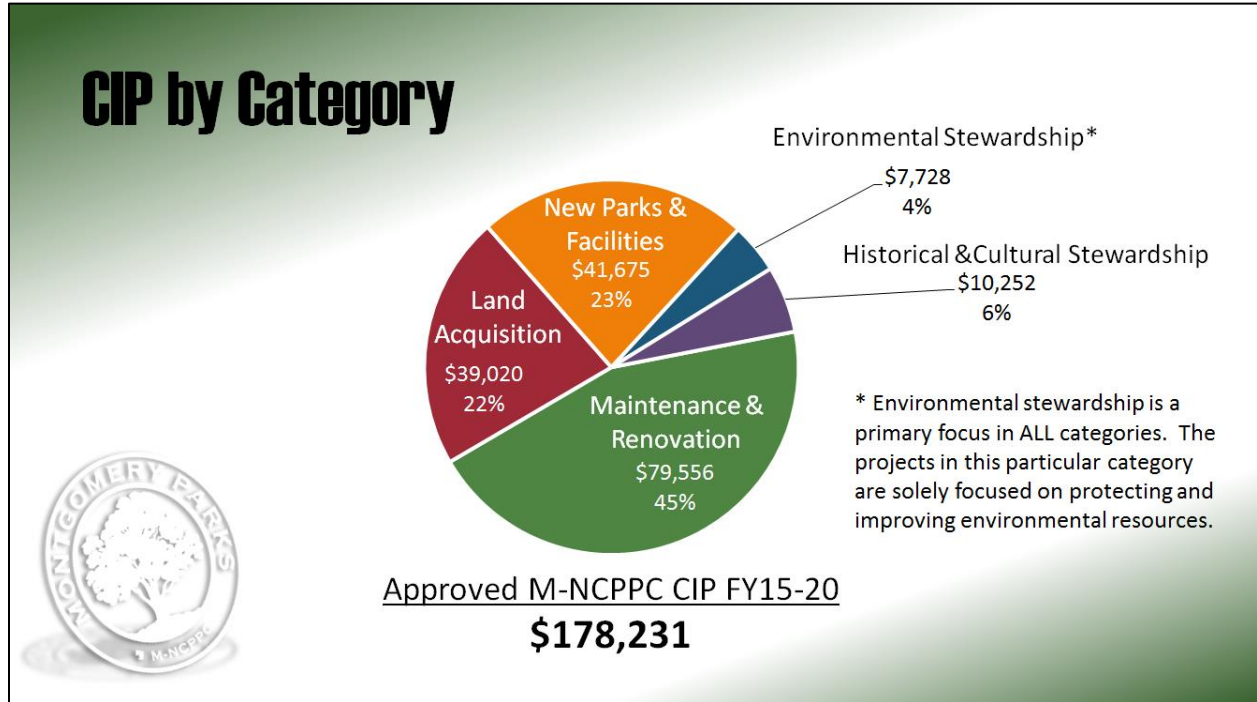
Staff request that the Board determine which of the “Additional Areas of Focus,” if any, be added to the Planning Board Criteria for the FY17-22 CIP.

CIP Categories:

Staff groups projects into expenditure categories to allow the Board to see how projects will meet the broad needs in the park system. The expenditure categories are as follows:

- **Maintenance and Renovation** – *repair, renovation, and lifecycle replacement of existing park facilities and supporting infrastructure;*
- **Land Acquisition** – *continued commitment to preservation of parkland through Legacy Open Space and park acquisition programs;*
- **New Parks and Park Facilities** – *responding to unmet park and recreation needs through new construction;*
- **Environment Stewardship** – *protection and enhancement of natural resources on parkland;*
- **Historical and Cultural Stewardship** - *protection and enhancement of historical and cultural resources on parkland.*

The categories and expenditures in the **current** approved FY15-20 CIP are as follows:



Category	Amount in Millions	Percentage of Six-Year CIP
Maintenance and Renovation*	\$79,556	44.6%
Land Acquisition*	\$39,020	21.9%
New Parks and Park Facilities*	\$41,675	23.4%
Environmental Stewardship†	\$7,728	4.3%
Historical & Cultural Stewardship†	\$10,252	5.8%

*Includes estimates for POS funding that requires annual requests from and is based upon availability

†The amounts for these categories are based on Project Description Forms (PDFs) dedicated solely to environmental and historical/cultural stewardship. However, majority of Park CIP projects include preservation of parkland, environmental resources and associated history.

The highest percentage of the CIP “pie” is dedicated to maintenance and renovation. The Department continues to invest more on maintenance and renovation projects as they tend 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, 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 has to 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 significant 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 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 fiscal climate continues to struggle, 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 FY17-22 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.

Although the Board may wish to shift priorities in the FY17-22 CIP, staff recommends using the same general evaluation criteria for preparing the FY17-22 CIP.

Prioritizing Projects for Inclusion in the CIP

Evaluation Process:

Attachment ① offers a visual of how projects are currently evaluated in the CIP. The green box shows from where projects typically originate. They then go through what we call a “sifting,” or evaluation process based on criteria listed in the blue section. The result is a CIP program consisting of projects that have gone through a comprehensive evaluation process. The pink section lists the constraints on our ability to program an unlimited number of projects.

Joint Parks and Recreation CIP Forum:

The joint Parks and Recreation CIP Public Forum was held on April 23, 2015 with the Planning Board and the Recreation Advisory Board. A summary of the testimony received and staff responses are included in Attachment ②. The testimony received centered around renovations and development of parks, most notably Ovid Hazen Wells and Carroll Knolls, but also included comments in favor of trails, cricket fields, stream protection, nature centers, community gardens, and safety issues. All testimony pertaining to County recreation facilities was forwarded to the Montgomery County Recreation Department.

Although public testimony is very important, it represents only a portion of all the projects that will compete for funding in the six-year CIP. Other projects that represent the six-year CIP include:

- Continuing projects approved in the FY15-20 CIP;
- Projects recommended in master plans and other studies;
- Needs identified in the PROS;
- CIP recommendations in Vision 2030;
- Requests submitted by park staff via the online Project Request Form;
- Directives from the Planning Board and County Council

Montgomery County CIP Forums:

Montgomery County Government has been holding a series of CIP forums hosted by each of its Citizen Advisory Boards (CAB) to obtain feedback from citizens on the CIP. These forums cover the CIP for all departments and agencies. Parks Staff have been attending each forum to serve as a resource for answering questions about Parks projects and our agency's CIP. At the conclusion of the Forum Series, each CAB will submit a letter to the County Executive outlining their interests, issues and priorities in the CIP. Staff will forward these to the Board when copies are made available. The meetings have been scheduled as follows:

- **Bethesda-Chevy Chase** – Monday, June 22, 7 p.m. at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda
- **Mid-County** – Tuesday, June 23, 7 p.m. at the Mid-County Community Recreation Center, 2004 Queensguard Road, Silver Spring
- **Eastern County** – Thursday, June 25, 7 p.m. at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, 3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring
- **Silver Spring** – Monday, June 29, 7 p.m. at the Silver Spring Civic Building, One Veterans Place
- **Upcounty** – Monday, July 13, 7 p.m. at the BlackRock Center for the Arts, 12901 Town Commons Drive, Germantown

Vision 2030, PROS, Master Plans and Other Studies:

In July 2012, the Planning Board approved the Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The PROS Plan was founded on principles in the Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation adopted the year before and it serves as the County's Land Planning, Preservation and Recreation Plan (LPPRP). Park Development and Park Planning and Stewardship staff have been working closely together to make sure that the goals, objectives, and implementation of PROS effectively guide future CIPs. Guidance from this Plan and others will be discussed in more detail at the next CIP strategy session scheduled for July 11. Here are various strategic and master plans that will provide guidance to the CIP:

- **Vision 2030** – Guidance on general areas of greatest overall facility needs based on Level of Services (LOS) areas as defined by the Vision 2030 Plan; Guidance on what facilities should be increased, decreased, or repurposed (some countywide, some linked to the four LOS areas).
- **PROS** – Guidance on facility needs for defined geographies such as team areas and planning areas. The Plan's recommendations effectively:
 - Create service delivery strategies to have the right park in the right place
 - Renovate and repurpose existing parkland and facilities
 - Implement new guidelines for urban parks
 - Apply new plan to manage natural areas throughout the park system
 - Manage and interpret historic and archaeological resources per cultural resources asset inventory database
 - Create an implementation plan to distribute needed facilities equitably

- **Area Master Plans** – Guidance on parkland acquisition, the role and type of each park or trail within a recommended open space system, suggested facilities for each park, and, sometimes, mechanisms for implementation
- **Site Selection Studies** – Guidance on location of specific facilities (in priority order), i.e., dog parks, skate parks
- **Park Master Plans** – Guidance on what facilities should be included in a specific park

Project Request Form:

Staff continue to utilize the Department’s on-line CIP and Major Maintenance request database that accumulates projects requested from field staff. This system allows the Park Development and Facilities Management Divisions to work collaboratively to evaluate and address the needs in the park system. The database utilizes an automated rating system that is based on several different evaluation criteria generally reflecting those approved by the Planning Board. Each criterion is weighted, points are added up, and a justification score is assigned to each project request making it easier to prioritize them within the CIP. Below is a list of the criteria:

Renovates Aging Infrastructure	<i>Reduces unexpected capital, operating or maintenance expenses of existing infrastructure</i>
Required by Mandates	<i>Federal/State/Local regulations (ADA, NPDES, other environmental regulations, etc.)</i>
Protects Natural or Cultural Resources	<i>Protects environmentally or culturally significant sites</i>
Supports Plans or Studies	<i>Supported by approved plans, including park/area master plans, surveys, condition or need assessment studies, LPPRP, etc.</i>
Meets Public Request	<i>Requested by public through testimony, C-tracks, letters, etc.</i>
Generates Revenue	<i>User fees, permits, admission fees, etc.</i>
Enhances Safety	<i>Eliminates hazard; repairs deteriorated condition thus reducing Commission's liabilities</i>
Operating Budget Impact	<i>Project requires increased staff, supplies/materials, capital outlay or utility costs.</i>

CIP Evaluation Committee:

The Department has formed a CIP Evaluation Committee consisting of the Parks Director, Deputy Directors, Chiefs of the divisions and regions in the Department. The Committee reviews the existing and candidate projects, considers established criteria and readiness, and provides feedback for prioritizing CIP projects. The biggest challenge facing the Evaluation Committee is helping to identify recommendations for the Board that will establish a balance between the Department’s commitment to

infrastructure replacement, stewardship of valuable resources, and the demand for new facilities. These meetings were held on May 6, May 19, and June 12.

Current FY15-20 Program:

Attachment ③ provides a summary, grouped by expenditure category, of the current Adopted FY15-20 CIP. This information will remind the Board of projects currently approved in the FY15-20 CIP as the Board considers recommendations for the FY17-22 CIP and capacity for new projects.

Capacity for Future CIP Projects

Below you will find a summary of past CIP requests, recommendations and final approvals by CIP cycle.

	FY07-12 CIP	FY09-14 CIP	FY11-16 CIP	FY 13-18 CIP	FY15-20 CIP
Planning Board Proposed	179.5	208.0	203.5	178.8	194.7
CE Recommended	169.1	192.9	161.5	166.0	168.6
Council Adopted	170.7	196.4	166.1	178.8	178.2

Amounts in Millions

After several years of very tight budgets that included funding cuts in the FY11-16 CIP, and requests to diminish GO bond funding in the FY13-18 and FY15-20 CIPs, staff was hopeful that the distance from the recent recession would mean a more favorable environment for the upcoming CIP cycle. However, we face continued constrictions on capacity which will not allow for many new projects and will demand creativity in meeting the growing needs of the park system.

In the past two CIP cycles, the County Executive asked departments and agencies to reduce GO bonds to a specified target. This year, the County has not issued any target reductions specific to CIP and GO bond fund levels. However, in response to fiscal constraints, the County recently announced a 2% reduction in spending for FY16 budget that the County Council recently approved. While the primary focus is on operating expenditures, reductions in CIP spending are not off the table. Attachment ④ is an article that recently appeared in the *Washington Post* that summarizes some of the challenges the County is facing. These include:

- Lower than expected revenues as a result of a \$21.4 million shortfall at the state level
- Millions of dollars in tax refunds that will have to be issued after the recent ruling on the *Wynne* case before the Supreme Court
 - FY16 losses of \$10-15 million
 - FY17 losses between \$55-76 million

Additional challenges that the County has reported through the Office of Management and Budget include:

- State approval of the Purple Line contingent upon a significant increase in the County’s contribution.
- Lower than expected transfer and recordation taxes in FY16

- Income tax revenues for FY16 and FY17 are below projections
- Federal Budget Challenges – Federal budgets continue to impact federal contractors located in the County and resident wages
- Implementation of Master/Sector Plans: White Flint; Shady Grove; Great Seneca; Wheaton; East County Science Center
- Student Enrollment Increasing
- Operating impact of new facilities
- Shifting of State responsibilities to local governments
- Higher than anticipated costs for cost-sharing of State teacher retirement obligations to local jurisdictions
- Cost and Price Spikes: Weather/Snow Removal; fuel and energy prices; food prices; etc
- Cost of compensation increases, health insurance and retirement, and retiree health insurance
- FY15 cost of snow removal/storm response: \$32 million
- Debt Service - Council increased GO Bonds to (\$340M/yr) and PAYGO (\$34M/yr). These levels may be unaffordable
- Tax-supported current revenue assumptions are also high. FY17 = \$68.3M. 6-yr tax-supported current revenue = \$390.4M
- The budgeted set-aside for FY17-20 is \$87.6M
 - This is \$42M less than the average for the last three full CIPs.
 - The next lowest set-aside (\$105M) was for the FY09-14 full CIP when our average bond issue was only \$295M/year vs. the Council approved \$340M/year.
 - The set-aside did not take into account the need for an MCPS replacement bus depot (\$32M) – a necessary project for full Smart Growth Initiative implementation.
- MCPS enrollment growth is expected to require significant funding for new schools and additions to avoid putting areas of the county into moratorium.
- Construction costs are beginning to increase as the economy improves
- More funding is needed for HVAC, Roof Replacement, Road Resurfacing and other level of effort projects to protect our infrastructure – particularly as renovations and modernizations are delayed.

Considering these points, it will be prudent to propose a FY17-22 CIP with only a modest increase, if any. Also, any new projects will likely be viewed under more scrutiny than might have been during other years when the economy was stronger, so for these new projects it will be necessary to communicate clear justifications.

Conclusion

We continue to review and evaluate new CIP requests after the conclusion of CIP Evaluation Committee discussions. This review is being done within the context of the issues outlined above. Staff seeks the Board's feedback on criteria for prioritizing projects in the CIP as presented in this memo. We will return to the Board on July 30 to continue discussions on CIP strategy. In addition to any other topics identified in today's discussion, Staff would propose discussing topics that include:

- What is in the current CIP that will roll over to FY17-22
- Level-of-effort and stand alone projects

- Potential new projects
- Funding sources in the CIP and their status including funding from the State, the County and the Commission's own funding

Summary of Requests for Board Guidance in this Staff Report

- Obtain guidance from the Planning Board on evaluation criteria, goals and priorities for the Parks FY17-22 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). (p.1)
- Staff request that the Board determine if these criteria are to be confirmed for the FY17-22 CIP and if there are any modifications or addition that the Board would like to make. (p.2)
- Staff request that the Board determine which of the "Additional Areas of Focus," if any, be added to the Planning Board Criteria for the FY17-22 CIP. (p.3)
- Although the Board may wish to shift priorities in the FY17-22 CIP, staff recommends using the same general evaluation criteria for preparing the FY17-22 CIP. (p.5)

Lastly, does the Board agree with the approach staff is taking for prioritizing projects for inclusion in the CIP (pp.5-8) and within the capacity constraints identified (pp.8-9)? Does the Board have additional feedback or direction for staff?

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Attachments

The CIP "Sifting" Process

FROM WHERE DO PROJECTS ORIGINATE?

- Park Master Plans
- PROS
- Other Plans & Studies
- Vision 2030
- Online Project Request Application
- Current CIP Program
- CIP Forum (Public)
- Planning Board Directives
- County Council Directives
- Land Acquisitions & Developer Park Donations
- Area Master and Sector Plans

HOW ARE THEY PRIORITIZED?

- Planning Board Criteria
- Facility Planning Evaluation Matrices
- Priorities Assigned by Field Staff
- Priorities Assigned by CIP Evaluation Committee
- New Projects versus Renovation Projects
- Chair and Director Priorities

FY17-22 CIP

WHAT ARE OUR LIMITATIONS?

- Funding
 - Park and Planning Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG)
 - GO Bond competition from other agencies
 - Other funding sources: State grants (POS, etc.) & bond bills; Federal funding; Contributions; Enterprise funds
- Staff
- Operating Budget Impact (OBI)

Summary of Testimony at the Joint Public Forum for the FY17-22 Capital Improvements Program Sponsored by Montgomery County Planning Board and Recreation Advisory Boards		
Written Testimony Attached?	Thursday, April 23, 2015	
Summary of Testimony	Staff Response	
Trails Group		
1	X	David Magill, representing MORE (Mid-Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts)
		MORE is responsible for building 10 natural surface bike trails in MC and PG County and maintaining 400 miles of trails. Would like us to execute on the capital plan to get bridges built. Request general trail improvements, specifically natural surface trails.
		The majority of our CIP budget for natural surface trails is spent on building bridges or boardwalks. Sometimes this infrastructure is quite expensive and it may take a couple of fiscal years to cover the costs of large bridges with associated stream stabilization. We have increase our funding in the last CIP cycle and will try to increase our future levels of funding in order to expedite larger, more complicated projects.
		Requests that M-NCPPC work with Pepco to create "power line trails." Maryland law limits you to do work on your property only, so urges MNCPPC to pursue authority to build and maintain trails on PEPCO property.
		M-NCPPC, Montgomery County Department of Parks has been coordinating closely with the Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE) for the past year or so, to urge PEPCO to accommodate trails on its lands. The PEPCO/Exelon merger agreement approved by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) includes a commitment by PEPCO to develop a pilot trail project in its electric transmission corridor between Cabin John Regional Park and South Germantown Recreational Park. The pilot trail project will involve coordination with MORE, M-NCPPC, Montgomery County, and Montgomery County Government. Montgomery County Department of Transportation will likely be the lead implementing agency.
2		Austin Steo, representing the Trail Conservancy
		Request we focus on building more natural surface trails. Stated that the Vision 2030 survey indicated that people's leading interest in parks are trails. Seems to be a discrepancy between what people want and what is in the CIP.
		We have increased our funding for the level of effort PDF for natural surface trails the last two CIP cycles. We agree that overall the funding is quite low for such a popular amenity. We have added staff to the trails building crew and hope to add more natural surface trails county wide.
3	X	David Scull, representing the Trail Coalition
		Asks us to encourage Pepco to allow for power line trails. Would like to see us get state legislation to enforce that Pepco allow the construction of natural surface trails. Requests support for trail to connect Soccer Plex in Germantown.
		State legislation is not required. PEPCO/Exelon ae fully committed to the pilot trail project on its land as part of the Maryland PSC merger agreement/approval. The pilot trail project is proposed to terminate near the Soccer Plex in Germantown.
4	X	Joe Fritsch
		Mountain Bike advocacy and paved trail advocacy are his main initiatives. Asks that we push for funding of land acquisition projects - they should be a priority. Wants to support the completion of the North Branch Hiker-Biker trail connector. Need trail connections overall, there are many commuters that are interested in this, and safer for children as well.
		MNCPPC has applied for a state grant to supplment funding for North Branch Trail. We hope to start construction in FY17 pending additional funding.
		Requesting help with trail maintenance. Many natural surface trails are maintained by volunteers.
		We have added staff and continue to seek funding for additional staff, however maintenance of trails cannot be done with Capital Improvement Funds.
		Urban Park Elements project – provides skate parks and thing in which kids and adults have interest
		Urban parks are one of MNCPPC's top priorities for the coming CIP.
Ballfields Group		
5	X	Cherian Eapon
		The need for a new cricket field is now urgent in the Upcounty area since the temporary cricket field currently at the SoccerPlex will be removed by June 2015 and many who play cricket in the area will be without a proper field for league play. It is my sincere hope that a site can be identified and a proper field can be constructed for cricket prior to the start of the 2016 season.
		Finding proper large enough sites for the hardball cricket game has been challenging due to the size of field needed. Site selection study results for a hardball league size, single sport cricket only field will be presented to the Planning Board on July 30, 2015. If the site(s) is/are approved by the Planning Board, the design and construction of the new cricket field will be proposed in the FY 17 -22 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to be presented to the Planning Board in the fall of 2015.
		Relocation of the carousel to Ovid Hazen Well is long overdue. Now that over 20,000 residents live in Clarksburg and the built portion of Ovid Hazen Wells Rec Park is heavily used, I urge the Planning Board to relocate the historic Hershell-Spillman carousel from Wheaton to Clarksburg as soon as possible.
		M-NCPPC is currently preparing a facility plan to relocate the carousel to Ovid Hazen Wells. We plan to submit this project for funding in the FY 17-22 CIP.
6	X	Manish Lodaya, representing the Montgomery County Cricket Association
		He has made a personal (monetary) investment in the Damacus and Clarksburg cricket fields. He is concerned over the fields that were moved to Strawberry Knolls. The residences are too close in proximity, which poses a safety concern – he stated people could be fatally struck with a ball, and the field is not appropriate for the hardball game. Cricket is an emerging market in the USA, and feels it would be a profitable venture.
		The Montgomery County Cricket Association has been very helpful in providing educational and monetary resources promoting and expanding cricket opportunities in Montgomery County. There has been may iterations of service delivery at many different sites over the years. Youth and cricket softball leagues are growing and fields have been provided for those demand segments. Those fields may not be large for the hard ball game. Finding proper large enough sites for the hardball cricket game has been challenging due to the size of field needed. Site selection study results for a hardball league size, single sport cricket only field will be presented to the Planning Board on July 30, 2015. If the site(s) is/are approved by the Planning Board, the design and construction of the new cricket field will be proposed in the FY 17 -22 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to be presented to the Planning Board in the fall of 2015.
7		Bradley Beeson, representing the Disc Golf Community

Summary of Testimony			Staff Response
		Would like to have another disc golf course built at Ovid Hazen Wells or Damascus Park. Suggests a pay-to-play facilities concept. Specifically, the Disc Golf community would like a 36 hole course that winds through the park, built under the tree canopy. Mentioned in the Vision 2030 plan. Suggests raising revenue through disc sales and vending. Game is easy for starters new to the game, requires only a single disc, simple and inexpensive to get into, no marshalls or tee times – low maintenance. Spoke of success story where users adopted the park – could apply same model to Ovid Hazen Wells. OHW is a perfect location: Mature trees, Elevation changes, Water features.	The Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park Master Plan Update was approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on November 20, 2014. This plan includes development of a Disc Golf course in the central area of the park called the Event Area. There are no plans, currently, to develop Disc Golf course at Damascus Recreational Park.
Carroll Knolls Urban Park Group			
8	X	Beverly Sobel Helped advocate for the protection of this green space. Now, would like to see facilities planning in this park including a park design. Specifically they want play equipment, basketball courts and a soccer field. Worries about children crossing Georgia Ave to get to a different park.	Project has been added as a candidate for Facility Planning. It is being considered for the FY17-22 CIP.
9	X	Judith Furash Long-time resident of Wheaton, right now lives in Plyers Mill Crossing. Wants Carroll Knolls to become a true play space. States that many children in this neighborhood need a safe place to play and ride bikes, to anchor the community and provide a gathering place. Worried about children crossing Georgia Ave to get to Evans Park. Asks that we give Carroll Knolls park a real design. From conservation standpoint we need to have people look at opportunities for nature learning and play.	
10		Randy Scope 15 year resident. Children playing in his yard. Asks that we fund Carol Knolls local park with playground equipment. A down county inline roller hockey would be great too	
11	X	Vincent Bradley The citizen association was created in 1994 to keep up with changes to parks nearby. Have been protecting site from developers since 2004. Hold at least two volunteer cleanups per year. Asks that we invest in Carroll Knowles UP.	
Individual Testimony			
12		Dave Goldberg Would like to see more town squares (like they have in Europe) where people gather in central urban areas. Praised Veterans Park in Bethesda, which has become an active meeting area. He states he will build a park in Bethesda (privately – funded by his business, "Union Hardware") which will extend Veterans Park near Woodmont Avenue. He wants to create a gateway and entrance to Bethesda. States urban parks/city squares give people a place to gather and socialize – please focus on these.	Urban parks are one of MNCPPC's top priorities for the coming CIP.
13	X	Renee Katz From the County-wide Recreation Advisory Board. Asked for increased programing and renovation of the building at Maydale Conservation Park. She scheduled a meeting on May 5th to consider strategic partnerships. Burtonsville area lacks nature center, there is a building already identified that was historically used in a way similar to a nature center. Would like the center to offer early childhood education in environmental conservation - variety of natural elements within short walking distance. Asks that this site be revitalized, and to support the governors focus on environmental literacy for children. Asks that we prioritize this project as there is strong community support. Elementary schools in the area are low-income and diverse and could benefit greatly from this.	M-NCPPC has programmed a project to conduct a planning study on nature centers to evaluate service delivery and prioritize projects. Maydale will be included.
14	X	James Caulfield Hillmead neighborhood resident. Has called 311parks. Empty lot adjacent to Hillmead Park - was abandoned house lot. It is overgrown and attracting coyotes. Layout will require some significant design time. Possible to create something exceptional. Spoke of joy on children's faces at state of art playgrounds. You don't get parcels adjacent to parks like this one and MNCPPC already owns it. Please allocate funds to this to prevent space from deteriorating further.	Project has been added to candidate list for future improvements and Facility Planning.
15	X	Roger Paden Rosemary Hills Lyttonsville – asks that we reconfigure park to be more friendly to senior citizens. Would like to see smaller, senior-friendly sports such as lawn bowling, croquet, badminton, bocce ball and other small court activities. Space should be regraded to be useful for these sports and provide benches for onlookers. Asks for shade trees to be planted, and equipment (for rental) to be provided. Asks that we enhance trails and connections, and construct trail-side workout stations. Would like to have a garden placed near the park with native plants and low water use plants.	Requests have been added to the candidate project list.
16	X	Barbara Schwarz, representing Friends of Brookside Gardens Asks that we supplement the garden programs. They have 400,000 visitors per year. Need to finish the construction quickly; they are having to cancel events such as weddings. Requesting funding for new phases of the park - implement the entire master plan; facility planning for conservatory adjacent to visitor center, greenhouse, stabilization of stream banks along Glenallen Ave, maintenance plan, fund interpretive exhibits. Brookside is a showcase for the County of everything that is good and treasured.	Requests have been added to the candidate project list.
17	X	Luke Ney	

		Summary of Testimony	Staff Response
		From the King Crossing neighborhood. Asks that site improvements be made - wants support for a community garden. No more room for expansion at nearby garden plots, need more space close by. Staff has responded that there is a lack of parking and lack of resources to develop the site. Asking for support. Would like a 30x50 garden lot and also the parking to be able to accommodate it.	Requests have been added to the candidate project list.
18		Annita Seckinger	
		Asks that we protect and restore streams in the county. Environmental site practices need to be put in place. Please support stream protection, pollution prevention, and legacy open space. Please increase the allocation for stream protection to 1.6 million for FY16 and beyond.	Thank you for your support. Pollution Prevention is being increased by \$25,000 in FY17 and beyond.
19	X	Michael Gurwitz	
		SOECA neighborhood. Would like to replace the Old Silver Spring Library which is no longer in use with an intergenerational recreation center, including ballfields. Parcel P933 could be made into a ballfield or open park space. While the community supports dog parks, they are losing open recreational space to a new dog park. Would like the facility to appeal to children, teenagers and even for Seniors -- there are several senior communities nearby. Asks for funding to turn Silver Spring library into an intergenerational recreation center.	As stated by Casey Anderson, M-NCPCC does not have authority to do this, it is in hands of the County Executive and Council as a first step
20	X	Jennifer Crown	
		Lives across the street from Kensington branch of Rock Creek Park. Provided pictorial evidence of pollution, garbage, and erosion issues within the creek. Specifically, she states that stormwater runoff is causing the creek to erode at the banks, which she estimates at 5-10 feet of loss from bank. There is inadequate groundcover to absorb runoff -- playing fields have contributed to this problem because they reduce native ground cover and absorption. Groups using the fields use them while wet and strip them of the grass, which also further complicates the situation. Park visitors leave behind trash. Feels that Rock Creek Park has reached a crisis. Please allocate funds to return fields to natural land in their natural state, especially since they are not generating any profit from park permit sales.	MNCPCC is actively persuing environmental enhancement projects throughout Rock Creek Watershed. Existing soccer field at Ken-Gar Park is slated to be converted to a wetland as part of the Purple Line mitigation. There is a high demand for athletic fields through out the county, especially in the down-county area. There are limited opportunities to eliminate fields in high demand. We will continue to look for opportunities to enhance the environment
		Asks that we offer more education programs in the parks and restore park wildlife and habitat. Suggests that providing park signs in multiple languages (especially signs regarding trash, litter, etc.) will be helpful as they are only in English right now -- there are many Spanish-speaking visitors. Parks website could also be made available in other languages. MCPS students could use more educational venues in the parks.	The Montgomery Parks website currently employs the Google Translation tool to provide a rough translation of content included on the site. A new website is being built and the translation of text using a tool like Google Translation is a core requirement of that site. We anticipate launching the redeveloped website in the spring of 2016. The Exhibit Shop and the sign program will be transferring to the FM Division as of July 1. We will suggest that our signage begin to include a Google Translate icon so that information presented on signs can be interpreted into the language of the park visitor's choosing. We will also suggest creating signage in multiple languages where appropriate; the park manager will often be the best point of reference for which of the nine dominant foreign languages spoken in Montgomery County should be used for translation/signage purposes. Google Translate is our recommended solution, however, because printing signage information in the various languages used by all park users is logistically difficult (makes for a lot of signage to place within an area), can be confusing to users, and is cost-prohibitive.
21	X	Robert DeFrank - emailed testimony	
		Respectfully request the Planning Board consider pedestrian safety improvement opportunities along County administered public roadways adjoining our shared Patuxent River greenways, specifically the Brown's Bridge Recreation Area, crossing at 2200 Ednor Road. Also at intersections of Brighton Dam Road Road and Triadelphia Reservoir Visitor Center.	MNCPCC can only consider improvements on or adjacent to park property.
22	X	Richard Parsons - emailed testimony	
		Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Montgomery County remain an important but underdeveloped resource, mainly because key links in our planned network of facilities remain unbuilt. This particular project provides a major link joining the Rock Creek Trail system, with the Muncaster Mill and ICC trails, and ultimately will connect everything from Olney to the DC line when the entire trail is completed. Will allow many more Montgomery County residents to enjoy the beauty and convenience of our extensive park system.	MNCPCC has applied for a state grant to supplant funding for North Branch Trail. We hope to start construction in FY17 pending additional funding.
23	X	Janet Buyer - emailed testimony	
		Express support for the funding and construction of the North Branch Trail. This will be a very useful and pleasant amenity to have.	MNCPCC has applied for a state grant to supplant funding for North Branch Trail. We hope to start construction in FY17 pending additional funding.
24	X	Diane Cameron, et. al. - emailed written tesimony	
		Representatives of ten organizations working to protect and restore streams in Montgomery County. One of the greatest threats to our streams is runoff from developed areas. Examples of degraded waterways exist throughout the County. State and county regulations requiring Environmental Site Design (ESD) practices are helping to stem the flow of runoff, but far too many streams remain degraded. We write today in support of robust funding for three Montgomery Parks programs: Stream Protection; Pollution Prevention; and Legacy Open Space. we urge the Commission to increase the Montgomery Parks Department allocation for its Stream Protection and Pollution Prevention programs to at least \$1.6 million for FY16 and beyond.	Thank you for your support. Pollution Prevention is being increased by \$25,000 in FY17 and beyond.
Herschell-Spellman Carousel Relocation			
25	X	Kasane Mihara - emailed testimony	

Summary of Testimony			Staff Response
		Please fund for the future amenities of the Ovid Hazen Wells Park and the relocation of the Herschell-Spellman Carousel to the park. Not only is the community big enough to support this park the community is still growing.	M-NCPPC is currently preparing a facility plan to relocate the carousel to Ovid Hazen Wells. We plan to submit this project for funding in the FY 17-22 CIP.
26	X	Lynn Fantle - emailed testimony	
		Writing to urge that the funding required to bring the Herschell-Spellman carousel from Wheaton to Clarksburg be allocated. It is time to honor the intent and the word of the agreement and deed.	
27	X	Maryan Khan - emailed testimony	
		Writing to ask tile County lo please let Clarksburg have the funding for the Ovid Hazen Wells park upgrades and the relocation of the Carousel. I took my three childrcn to the park just yesterday, and I was telling them about how the park may get a carousel. Their eyes just lite up, and they started asking if the carousel was already at the park. The Clarksburg area has so many young families that I am sure the carousel will get very good use. It will become the place/park to hang out for fanlilies with children.	
28	X	Angela Smith - emailed testimony	
		Writing to ask you to please fund the Ovid Hazen Wells Park in Clarksburg, MD. We are a fast growing community with active children. In this rapidly growing technology age there is nothing more important than getting our children outside for fresh air. We would love to see the Herschell-Spellman Carousel relocated to the park in Clarksburg as well, where it was intended to be.	
29	X	Adnaan Riaz Ahmad - emailed testimony	
		Writing to ask tile County lo please let Clarksburg have the funding for the Ovid Hazen Wells park upgrades and the relocation of the Carousel. I took my three childrcn to the park just yesterday, and I was telling them about how the park may get a carousel. Their eyes just lite up, and they started asking if the carousel was already at the park. The Clarksburg area has so many young families that I am sure the carousel will get very good use. It will become the place/park to hang out for fanlilies with children.	
30	X	Linda Panagoulis - emailed testimony	
		Writing to ask for funding for the amenities of the Ovid Hazen Wells Parks and the relocation of the Herschetl-Spellman Carousel to the park. This was mandated in the deed when the land was donated to Montgomery County far the benefit of the community. The Up-County region has by far been unrecognized and had a lack of services that it needs. This deed for the carousel explicitly stated it would come back to the Clarksburg area. The population of children has risen in this area, and this amenity should be brought home now.	
		KW Miller of Damascus, MD (Kenny Miller) moved the awakening statue from DC to National harbor and has moved and setup carousel's in the past if you need someone to do the work, perhaps they would be interested in the job.	
31	X	Kathie Hulley - emailed written testimony	
		Would like to express my support for the funding for Ovid Hazen Wells Park, especially bringing home the Carousel, which is long overdue.	
Meadowside Nature Center			
32	X	Amy Beam - emailed written testimony	M-NCPPC has programmed a project to conduct a planning study on nature centers to evaluate service delivery and prioritize projects.
		Urge you to support the requests for renovations, upgrades, improvements, and facility plans that have been submitted through the CIP at the Montgomery Parks Nature Centers, namely, Meadowside Nature Center, Brookside Nature Center, Black Hill Nature Programs, and Locust Grove Nature Center. Nature centers and programs introduce many people to the park system and keep them coming back. Recent improvements at MEadowside are much appreciated and we hope to see these improvements continue to be funded and park attendance continue to increase!	
33	X	Becky Lessey - emailed written testimony	
		Volunteer at Meadowside nature center. Has seen little change in the support from the CIP since she started volunteering in 2001. Facilites for birds need to be improved. Hopes that PB will support Meadowside and all nature centers in the county to assist them in continuing the value that they add to our community.	

FY15-20 CIP Program by Expenditure Category

Adopted FY16 Capital Budget, May 2016

PDF #	Project (PDF)	Six Year Total	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
LAND ACQUISITION								
<i>Continued commitment to preservation of parkland through Legacy Open Space and park acquisition programs</i>								
767828	Acquisition: Local Parks	5,210	1,035	1,035	535	535	1,035	1,035
998798	Acquisition: Non-Local Parks	5,810	1,135	1,135	635	635	1,135	1,135
727007	ALARF: M-NCPPC	6,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
018710	Legacy Open Space	22,000	3,250	3,250	4,250	4,250	3,500	3,500
	Category Total	39,020	6,420	6,420	6,420	6,420	6,670	6,670
NEW PARKS & PARK FACILITIES								
<i>Responding to unmet park and recreation needs</i>								
008720	Ballfield Initiatives (50%)*	2,440	360	335	410	410	450	475
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
957775	Facility Planning: Local Parks (50%)*	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
958776	Facility Planning: Non-Local Parks (50%)	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
078704	Germantown Town Center Urban Park	1,081	1,081	0	0	0	0	0
078705	Greenbriar Local Park	2,301	2,301	0	0	0	0	0
038703	Laytonia Recreational Park	10,877	1,000	3,000	4,000	2,877	0	0
138703	Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area	5,388	0	0	250	310	2,524	2,304
098706	Magruder Branch Trail Extension	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
998799	Minor New Construction - Local Parks	1,350	225	225	225	225	225	225
998763	Minor New Construction - Non-Local Parks	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
871541	North Branch Trail	4,290	0	0	100	966	1,205	2,019
118704	Northwest Branch Recreational Park-Athletic Area	150	75	75	0	0	0	0
138704	Seneca Crossing Local Park	5,668	0	0	0	184	2,242	3,242
058755	Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements (50%)*	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
768673	Trails: Hard Surface Design & Construction	1,800	300	300	300	300	300	300
858710	Trails: Natural Surface Design, Constr. & Renov. (50%)*	750	125	125	125	125	125	125
871540	Urban Park Elements (50%)*	125	50	75	0	0	0	0
871548	Western Grove Urban Park	1,105	255	250	350	250	0	0
	Category Total	41,675	6,497	5,110	6,485	6,372	7,796	9,415
MAINTENANCE & RENOVATION								
<i>Repair, renovation, and lifecycle replacement of existing park facilities and supporting infrastructure</i>								
128701	ADA Compliance: Local Parks	3,700	500	550	600	650	700	700
128702	ADA Compliance: Non-Local Parks	4,800	700	750	800	850	850	850
008720	Ballfield Initiatives (50%)*	2,440	360	335	410	410	450	475
118701	Battery Lane Urban Park	925	0	0	100	200	222	403
078702	Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation	5,620	2,149	1,200	1,500	771	0	0
138701	Elm Street Urban Park (50%)*	597	0	100	194	303	0	0
998773	Enterprise Facilities' Improvements	4,800	800	800	800	800	800	800
957775	Facility Planning: Local Parks (50%)*	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
958776	Facility Planning: Non-Local Parks (50%)*	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
98705	Falls Road Local Park	1,635	500	885	250	0	0	0
138702	Kemp Mill Urban Park (50%)*	5,093	2,163	2,220	710	0	0	0
078706	North Four Corners Local Park (50%)*	1,170	1,170	0	0	0	0	0
967754	PLAR - LP	13,770	2,295	2,295	2,295	2,295	2,295	2,295
968755	PLAR - NL	10,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800
118702	Rock Creek Maintenance Facility	9,250	614	1,860	2,900	2,044	1,832	0
838882	Roof Replacement: Non-Local Pk	1,578	263	263	263	263	263	263
	Shady Grove Maintenance Facility Relocation	100	50	50	0	0	0	0
058755	Small Grant/Donor-Assisted Capital Improvements (50%)*	900	150	150	150	150	150	150
888754	Trails: Hard Surface Renovation	3,100	800	800	600	300	300	300
858710	Trails: Natural Surface Design, Constr. & Renov. (50%)*	750	125	125	125	125	125	125
871540	Urban Park Elements (50%)*	125	50	75	0	0	0	0
138705	Woodside Urban Park	6,603	300	250	2,000	2,344	1,709	0
	Category Total	79,556	15,089	14,808	15,797	13,605	11,796	8,461

PDF #	Project (PDF)	Six Year Total	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL STEWARDSHIP								
<i>Protection and enhancement of historical and cultural resources on parkland</i>								
871552	Josiah Henson Special Park	5,070	0	260	260	700	1,750	2,100
808494	Restoration Of Historic Structures	2,282	782	300	300	300	300	300
118703	Warner Circle Special Park	600	300	300	0	0	0	0
098703	Woodlawn Barn Visitors Center	2,300	1,800	500	0	0	0	0
	Category Total	10,252	2,882	1,360	560	1,000	2,050	2,400
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP								
<i>Protection and enhancement of environmental resources on parkland</i>								
998710	Energy Conservation - Local Parks	222	37	37	37	37	37	37
998711	Energy Conservation - Non-Local Parks	240	40	40	40	40	40	40
078701	Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds & Lakes	3,850	625	625	650	650	650	650
818571	Stream Protection: SVP	3,416	533	533	575	575	600	600
	Category Total	7,728	1,235	1,235	1,302	1,302	1,327	1,327
	Development Categories	139,211	25,703	22,513	24,144	22,279	22,969	21,603
	GRAND TOTAL	178,231	32,123	28,933	30,564	28,699	29,639	28,273

* Project Expenditures are split 50/50 between the Infrastructure Maintenance and New Park Facilities categories

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Maryland Politics

Montgomery County considers cuts to 2016 budget it just passed

By **Bill Turque** June 26

Montgomery County, faced with lower-than-expected revenue and millions in tax refunds triggered by a Supreme Court decision, is preparing to cut the 2016 operating budget that council members approved just five weeks ago.

In a memo released late Friday afternoon, the chief administrative officer, Timothy L. Firestine, ordered department heads to prepare 2 percent reductions in spending for the fiscal year that begins Wednesday. The “savings plan,” as Firestine called it, would shave about \$25 million from the \$5 billion operating budget, county officials estimated.

Firestine said the reductions would be submitted to the County Council for action before the summer recess that begins after its July 28 session.

[*\[Supreme Court says Maryland wrongly double taxing some residents\]*](#)

The cuts are necessary, Firestine said, in part because the county’s most recent distribution of income tax revenue from the state fell \$21.4 million short of projections. In addition, costs associated with last month’s Supreme Court decision in *Comptroller of the Treasury of Maryland v. Wynne* may run higher than estimated.

The court ruled 5 to 4 on May 18 that Maryland’s income tax law is unconstitutional because it does not provide a full credit to residents for income tax paid outside the state. A portion of state income tax revenue is returned to the counties.

The court said the law created improper double taxation.

Since the decision, the comptroller’s office has been validating claims for refunds filed by taxpayers who have challenged withholding of the full credit over the past several years. The amount of the refunded taxes will be

withheld by the state in future distributions to the county.

Montgomery officials said early estimates showed the county losing \$10 million in fiscal 2016. But new projections put the cost of refunds at closer to \$15 million. Losses for fiscal 2017, originally estimated at \$55 million, might be closer to \$76 million, Firestine said.

[Leggett says residents have to “face reality” about higher taxes]

In his memo, Firestine said that County Executive Isiah Leggett “is aware of the disruption and difficulty this action creates and greatly appreciates the ongoing efforts . . . to provide services in the most efficient and cost effective manner possible.”

It was not clear whether the budget reductions would reduce or eliminate the likelihood of a property tax increase in fiscal 2017. Leggett said in the spring that he came close to recommending an increase for 2016 but decided against it.

At a March 16 news conference, Leggett said that an increase is “almost unavoidable down the line.”

Bill Turque, who covers Montgomery County government and politics, has spent more than thirty years as a reporter and editor for The Washington Post, Newsweek, the Dallas Times Herald and The Kansas City Star.
