

**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
PRESS RELEASE**

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For more information, contact:

Nancy C. Lineman
Chief, Community Outreach and Media Relations
The Montgomery County Planning Board
301/495-4600

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF
NEW DIRECTOR OF PARKS**

SILVER SPRING, MD – The Montgomery County Planning Board announced the selection of Mary Bradford -- a seasoned park professional who began her career as a park ranger and worked her way up to associate director of the National Park Service -- to serve as director of parks for the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning.

Bradford was a senior executive service employee at the National Park Service. She oversaw all human resources, technology and financial operations for an agency with a \$1.5 billion operating budget and \$2 billion construction and development budget.

She successfully guided the park service through serious funding cutbacks and provided key leadership during the government shutdown of 1996. She supervised major park ranger training centers and helped lead a major internal reorganization of staff designed to provide greater accountability for service delivery to park users.

She was deputy regional director of the National Park Service in Santa Fe, New Mexico where she supervised 44 parks, historic sites, seashores and recreation areas in a six-state region. Throughout her extensive career, she has worked closely with park maintenance crews, rangers, planners and park police.

Bradford, a 25-year resident of Silver Spring, has strong ties to the local community and served as co-chair of the Long Branch Task Force from 2002 through 2005 where she helped produce comprehensive plans for neighborhood revitalization that included incorporating park services with youth programs, policing and safety initiatives. She is a past president of the Eastern Area Recreation Advisory Board. She also speaks Spanish.

While working for the Department of the Interior, she provided legal counsel and briefed Congress, the White House and the Office of Management and Budget on a range of issues including national parks, trails, the Clean Water Act, outdoor recreation and historic preservation.

“We sought the very best person to provide unmatched leadership, direction and good stewardship of Montgomery County’s parkland,” said Planning Board Chairman Derick Berlage. “We got everything we were looking for in Mary Bradford -- and more.”

“The Montgomery County park system has earned national accolades for its fiscal management and innovative ways of protecting land resources for future generations,” said Bradford. “I look forward to joining the talented employees at the agency and working with the Board and the Council to protect the parks and plan even more for the future.”

Bradford has a law degree from Georgetown University, a master’s degree from Stanford University and a bachelor’s degree from the University of Maryland.

Bradford will report directly to the five-member Planning Board. This leadership and managerial structural change marks a decision by the Planning Board to have both a director of parks and a director of planning to ensure greater accountability for both sides of the agency.

She will assume her duties on Tuesday, February 21. Bradford will spend the first few weeks on the job visiting park facilities, getting to know park managers and learning about the issues and challenges facing the 32,600-acre park system.

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