

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

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**M-NCPPC AWARDED \$20,000 GRANT FOR TWO NEW HEART SMART TRAILS
TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND EXERCISE IN PARKS**

SILVER SPRING, MD - The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) has received a \$20,000 grant from the National Recreational Trails program of the Maryland State Highway Administration for two new "Heart Smart Trails" in Montgomery County Parks to promote healthy, outdoor exercise among residents and visitors. One of the new trails will be located in Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreational Park in Silver Spring, and the other will be located at Centerway Local Park in Gaithersburg.

"We're especially pleased with the Heart Smart Trail grant and thank the Maryland SHA for the opportunity to expand this important program for the health of our residents," said M-NCPPC Chairman Derick P. Berlage.

Montgomery Parks' two existing Heart Smart Trails are located at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton and South Germantown Recreational Park in Germantown. These specially marked trails are each a mile in length, with a bronze Heart Smart Trail plaque placed every tenth of a mile on a section of an existing gently-graded hard surface trail that is accessible to all from sunrise to sunset, every day of the year.

M-NCPPC's Heart Smart Trails initiative promotes a healthful environment in parks conducive to regular physical activity in safe, pedestrian friendly routes.

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, lack of physical activity is a leading contributor to illness and disability. Walking is a gentle yet effective exercise that can be done with children or older family members, is low in cost and can fit in with almost any lifestyle. Those using wheelchairs may also find these accessible Heart Smart Trails useful.

Information on Montgomery County's Heart Smart Trails and nearly 200 miles of trails throughout the County is available online at www.montgomerytrails.org. Heart Smart Trail maps and walking logs can be easily downloaded.

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