

Semi-Annual Report

Fall 2013



Montgomery County Department of Parks | Montgomery County Planning Department
MontgomeryParks.org | MontgomeryPlanning.org
M-NCPPC Montgomery County

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Letter from the Chair

President Navarro and Members of the Council:

It is my pleasure to summarize the latest efforts of the Planning Board, Planning Department and Department of Parks in our fall 2013 Semi-Annual Report.

We have worked diligently to continue our momentum on important projects and initiatives. So much so that the Planning Board held 69 meetings between September 2012 and September 2013, a period when we would normally hold approximately 45 meetings. Eleven of the 69 meetings were specifically to review the zoning code rewrite, and 63 of them included the zoning rewrite, master plans, or both—we have had many meetings where we had to be prepared to discuss more than one master plan in the same day. I am indebted to our part-time board members for their dedication in meeting these additional demands on their time.

The high points of the departments' ambitious work programs and accomplishments are summarized in this report.

The Department of Parks continues to develop innovative ways to manage and protect our valuable natural and cultural resources while offering programs and services that are important to County residents.

- Collaboration with the County's Department of Recreation and the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities continues as we work to develop a joint registration system that will enable all three agencies to provide better customer service and easier access to programs and services.
- Water Quality Protection Funding has allowed the Department of Parks to complete several water quality projects, establishing programs to monitor storm drain outfalls for non-stormwater discharges, and to hire staff needed to focus on maintenance of stormwater facilities on parkland, management of nuisance wildlife in stormwater facilities, and assessment and implementation of green management practices on parkland, as well as increased volunteer efforts.

- More than 11,000 volunteers contributed more than 84,000 hours in the last fiscal year (the equivalent of 40 work years), equating to over \$1.8 million in value. Financial support from the Water Quality Protection Fund helped us increase stream clean-ups by more than 130 percent, resulting in 75,000 pounds of trash removed from our stream valleys in April alone.
- The Department of Parks is working closely with the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) and several other County, State and National agencies to minimize the impacts from sewer overflows and leaks in Montgomery County.
- Access evaluations related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been completed within the Shady Grove, Black Hill, Little Bennett and Rock Creek maintenance areas. The third round of evaluations, which will cover the Olney Manor and Martin Luther King maintenance areas, will begin this fall.
- The Enterprise Division continues to meet overall revenue goals and cover all debt payments. Ice and Tennis facilities continue to be popular among park patrons. Summer camps did exceptionally well this year, with 1700 participants attending 84 camp programs—a 20 percent increase in revenues from the previous year.
- An innovative “Managers on Bikes” program has increased interaction between park managers and park and trail users. Park managers can keep a close eye on parks, facilities and trails while getting exercise by cycling several times a week.

The Department of Parks also has its eye on the horizon to ensure improved programs and services for our residents. Staff is working alongside community organizations and residents to address the increasing urbanization of the down county area to ensure parks and open space are included in future plans and to support our popular community garden program. Work also continues on efforts to generate additional revenue to support the park system, including a system-wide corporate sponsorship program, and on strategic fundraising programs through the Parks Foundation.

In Planning, we have neared completion on a record number of master plans, which have several themes in common. They continue to pursue the important link between transportation and planning, with a focus on transit. They aim to create new, more compact communities that allow people to live, work, shop, play, and learn without getting into a car. These communities will be more sustainable with greatly reduced vehicle miles travelled, more energy efficient housing types, more physical activity and social engagement.

The Biennial Master Plan Monitoring report tracks implementation of plan recommendations. In White Flint, the report finds that development is moving quickly to create a new, transit-oriented neighborhood out of shopping mall parking lots. In the Great Seneca Science Corridor, the master plan’s framework for a transit-accessible science center is slowly being filled in with new development and community-building amenities. New housing, stores, parks, schools, and increased access to the Metro Red Line in both White Flint and Shady Grove will create tax revenue along with living and working options.

At the Red Line’s other end, the Planning Board Draft of the Glenmont Plan envisions the reinvigoration of an under-used Metro station community by enabling mixed-use development of the older shopping center and garden apartments within walking distance of the station. We also have been working with Executive staff on relocating the Park and Planning Departments to Wheaton, to help jump-start the economic revitalization of the CBD envisioned by the recent Wheaton Sector Plan.

Two Purple Line plans that have just been completed, Chevy Chase Lake and Long Branch, make measured land use recommendations designed to invigorate their communities, while preserving

their best characteristics. That effort will continue with the Bethesda Purple Line Station plan and the Bethesda CBD plan.

Our most transformational effort is also linked to transit. The Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan is the first comprehensive update of the Master Plan of Highways since 1955. Its focus is bus rapid transit, an effort already being recognized for its potential as a national model, but the plan goes further to address the bicycle, pedestrian, and MARC improvements that will create a fully functioning network of transportation options. This approach will fundamentally shift expectations and services for suburban transportation.

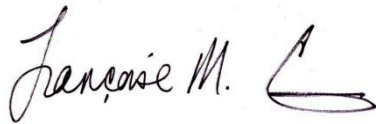
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Our zoning rewrite is close to completion, and coupled with constant examination of how we communicate our work and organize our processes, promises to keep Montgomery County at the cutting edge of sustainable community building.

The commitment of our remarkable staff in both the Planning Department and the Department of Parks continues to impress me. It is because of their hard work, dedication and creativity that we are able to provide such a breadth of quality programs and services to the residents of Montgomery County.

I look forward to reviewing our accomplishments and discussing the important issues facing our agency at the semi-annual presentation on October 29, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Françoise M." followed by a stylized flourish.

Françoise M. Carrier
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
Vice-Chair, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Department of Parks

What We've Done

Green Initiatives: Fuel sites at Meadowbrook and Wheaton Maintenance Yards have been upgraded to replace underground storage tanks with more ecologically friendly above-ground tanks. The Maintenance Yards at South Germantown Recreational Park, Black Hill Regional Park and Little Bennett Regional Park are scheduled to be upgraded next. All upgraded sites will also receive the new Fuel-Master computer system with new dispensers and security hardware.



Green Initiatives

Through continued energy management efforts partially funded through Department of Energy grants, we have been able to keep overall consumption rates flat, even with the addition of new parks and facilities. The major change this past year has been a decrease in the cost of energy resources. The reductions, due to favorable market rates in 2012 and 2013, were for electricity 11 percent, natural gas 24 percent, and propane 15 percent. Projects underway this year included additional lighting retrofit and heating and air conditioning equipment replacements.

In calendar year 2012, our rate for required and voluntary recycling programs was 71.9 percent, well above the required rate of 50 percent. A pilot program is underway in Wheaton Regional Park in an effort to improve public recycling rates, especially at our heavily used picnic pavilions. Our water consumption reduction program focused on irrigation water consumption and service location consolidation, effectively reducing our water and sewage costs by nine percent.

We have established a Sustainability Committee to develop departmental best practices which meet sustainability standard requirements, guide our efforts, and evaluate our results. An employee awareness and training program is being planned for the Fall.

Construction is currently underway at Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park, selected as one of 162 pilot projects to participate in the national Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) program. This program is similar to LEED for building projects, but establishes sustainable performance benchmarks for site work and landscape projects. Staff submitted preliminary project documentation for review and anticipates achieving SITES project certification in 2014. To date, only 23 projects have achieved certification nationwide.

Inter-Agency Collaboration: We continue to work with WSSC to carry out the work required under the WSSC Consent Decree to reduce and eliminate sewer overflows and leaks in Montgomery County. Many of these repairs are occurring in our Stream Valley Parks, including Sligo Creek, Cabin John, Northwest Branch, Muddy Branch, Paint Branch, Little Falls, Seneca Creek, and Watts Branch. Our staff has been coordinating with WSSC and its consultants to minimize impacts from these efforts. Other agencies coordinating on this project include the Maryland Department of the Environment, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Historical Trust, Montgomery County Government, METRO, National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Efforts are underway with the County's Department of Recreation (MCRD) and Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) to transition to a single registration system through Active Net. Active Net is a web-hosted solution that will enable all three agencies to provide better customer service

through a consolidated customer base that will require only one user account per customer, with social media integration and a mobile-enabled environment. The implementation of this system is likely to take 12-18 months. We are currently in the process of finalizing the timeline and determining budget impacts for FY14, FY15 and beyond, in preparation for an October discussion with the PHED committee. In August, two of our park planners delivered a presentation on “Urban Parks and the Nighttime Economy” to the Nighttime Economy Task Force. The presentation focused on how parks can play a critical role in establishing a vibrant nighttime economy, challenges and best practices when activating parks at night, and how Montgomery Parks is changing the way we develop and manage our urban parks. The presentation was very well received.



Children in Nature

As part of our ongoing commitment to the Governor’s Children in Nature initiative, we are exploring the possibility of implementing new statewide stream restoration partnership opportunities with county schools. Under this program, we would work with schools interested in “adopting” streams or tributaries on or near their property to develop educational programs for students that include restoration activities.

We continue to enjoy a reciprocal reference relationship between our Customer Information Office and County 311. Working with County staff allows us to provide accurate information and direct the public to the correct service entity to resolve issues or complaints regardless of where the call is received. We look forward to maintaining this results-focused relationship in the future and providing a consistently positive interaction with our customers.

Required Federal and State Mandates: Progress continues under Parks’ Phase II National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Several water quality projects have occurred, including the removal and naturalization of an obsolete asphalt parking lot at Valley Mill Special Park. Monitoring storm drain outfalls for non-stormwater discharges under the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) program began this spring in South Germantown Recreational Park, Martin Luther King Recreational Park and Paint Branch SVU4. No illicit discharges were identified from these investigations. Additional Water Quality Protection Funding in FY14 allowed us to hire staff needed to focus on maintenance of stormwater facilities on parkland, management of nuisance wildlife in stormwater facilities, and assessment and implementation of green management practices on parkland, as well as increasing volunteer efforts to keep our stream valleys clean and trash-free. As a result, Parks saw one of the largest and most productive Earth Months in April for volunteer stream cleanups, with thousands of volunteers removing over 75,000 pounds of trash through more than 90 clean-up events.



Upper Paint Branch Wet Land Retrofit

We have completed 20 of the 32 Environmental Stewardship/Compensatory Mitigation projects required as a result of the construction of the Intercounty Connector. These projects aim to enhance

the ecological value of the resources on the targeted land and include stream restorations, stormwater management ponds, creating wetlands, and reforestation sites. Eight of the remaining projects are currently under construction, and four are in the final stages of design.

Access evaluations related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been completed for parks within the Shady Grove, Black Hill, Little Bennett, and Rock Creek maintenance areas. An Interim Transition Plan was submitted to the Department of Justice in August. Included in this submission were signage reports for 19 parks as well as completion reports for four parks as mandated by the Settlement Agreement (SA). Consultant RAC continued to provide employee training, policy review, and expert advice on an ongoing basis. RAC assisted in a public outreach meeting in June hosted by the Commission on Peoples with Disabilities, as well as a presentation to the Planning Board in July. The third round of evaluations is expected to start in late September/early October for the Olney Manor and Martin Luther King maintenance areas.

Enterprise Successes: For another consecutive year, the Enterprise Division finished “in the black” in FY13, meeting its overall revenue goals and covering all salary costs and debt payments from its operating capital, including those for Little Bennett Golf Course (the Revenue Authority made their last payment in FY12). The Division’s debt service will be retired in November 2013, freeing up critical funding for major facility improvements to address aging infrastructure.



Cabin John Ice Rink

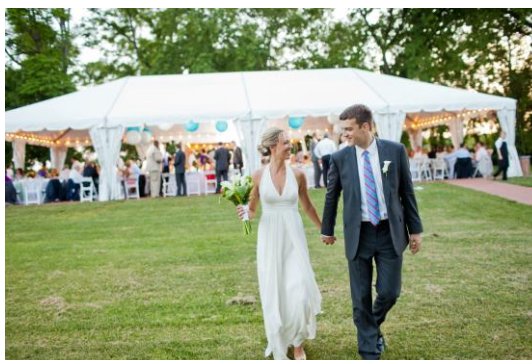
The Ice and Tennis facilities continue to offer successful class programs and have added a number of tournaments, special play days and competitions to increase customer participation. This past summer the Enterprise facilities hosted 84 camp programs with 1,700 participants, increasing revenues by 20 percent over last year.

This past spring, the Wheaton Sports Pavilion and the newly installed Seneca Lodge tent pad opened to the public for rentals. The Sports Pavilion is the re-purposed Wheaton Outdoor Ice Rink, and is available for league play, tournaments, and special activities in soccer, futsal and lacrosse. The new tent pad is a popular amenity for events such as weddings and large parties.

WeddingWire.Com Review

“The staff at Woodlawn Manor was amazing! They really worked with me and my mother to make my wedding day special and memorable for me, my husband and our guests. The staff responded to all of our inquiries in a timely manner and offered great suggestions. My guests loved the venue and I can't wait to see all of the pictures.”

Recent facility upgrades continue such as new rubber flooring, energy efficient heat-recovery systems and ADA-accessible bathroom stalls at Cabin John Ice Rink, and compressor repairs at Wheaton Ice Arena. The exteriors of the Pauline Betz Addie Tennis facility and the Sky View Lodge at Rockwood Manor were painted. The South Germantown Splash Park added more ADA picnic tables and furniture to provide more dry land seating. The South Germantown Driving Range added yard markers to gauge distance



and purchased a new ball picker.

Community Gardens: Community demand continues for new garden sites, but expansion of the community garden program has been slowed to accommodate work needed to conform to ADA regulations. Four of the 11 existing gardens are being renovated to include accessible plots, and ADA requirements for new gardens and additions to existing gardens are likely to increase costs and make suitable site locations more challenging to identify. In June 2013, with support from Whole Foods Market, the Longbranch Community Garden opened for rental. For the first time since the program's inception, all plots have been rented.

Improved Responsiveness and Customer Service: The Montgomery Parks Service Center is maintained in Rockville at the Facilities Management Maintenance Yard. Live operators receive calls for repairs or service and input requests into the SmartParks work order management system. In FY13, the Service Center received over 9,000 inquiries resulting in 6,811 work requests—a six percent increase over FY12. A toll-free answering service provides coverage after-hours and on weekends, and responded to over 230 calls in FY13.



Community Garden Produce

An Incident Command Center has been established to streamline and make more effective our internal response to and management of emergency and weather-related events. This allows for a smooth flow of vital information between Park field operations and incident management. It allows instantaneous access to damage assessment and measured deployment of resources. It has also improved coordination with the County's Emergency Command Operation Center during countywide emergency events. The dynamic relationship and communications link is a valuable tool in our public service portfolio.

A new "Managers on Bikes" program (MOB) puts our park managers on bikes and in our parks twice a week, actively checking on facilities and trail maintenance issues and chatting with customers. Patrolling park trails and other amenities on bikes allows managers to closely assess park maintenance and improvement needs, puts them in direct contact with park and trail users, and provides a better platform for customer relations and a reduced carbon footprint—in addition to increasing fitness levels for our park managers themselves!

Parks Foundation: The Montgomery Parks Foundation continues to successfully establish itself as a sustainable, independent non-profit charitable organization to support Montgomery Parks. The Foundation operates on a calendar fiscal year and as of June 30, 2013, achieved revenue of \$280,000 in donations and private support. This exceeds the amount of money the Department spent to support the Foundation. In July, the Board of Trustees adopted a revised Mission and established guiding Values to support its work.

Volunteerism: In FY13, more than 11,000 volunteers contributed the equivalent of 40 work years in 24 distinct program areas supporting a wide variety of programs throughout the parks system. This contribution of more than 84,000 hours has an estimated dollar value of over \$1.8 million.



Volunteer Clean-up 500 tires

Park Police: Our dedicated Park Police continue to keep our parks, facilities and park patrons safe. In addition to responding to thousands of calls for service a year, Park Police actively patrol our parks, trails, and parking lots by car, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, bicycle, horse and on foot, looking for and responding to suspicious activity, security concerns and violations of park rules and regulations. Our highly-visible officers are also in constant communication with park patrons and County residents, supporting hundreds of community events each year and engaging with youth through activities including afterschool programs like the Montgomery County Recreation Department's Longbranch Homework Club.



Mounted Officers at National Night Out

Where We're Headed

Urbanizing Areas and Urban Parks: The 2012 PROS Plan recognizes the need for urban parks to include community gathering spaces, dog parks, skate parks, and community gardens. We have since recommended these needed facilities in area master plans and their implementation through regulatory review in areas such as White Flint, Wheaton, Takoma Langley, Great Seneca Science Corridor, Chevy Chase Lake, Glenmont, Long Branch, and White Oak Science Gateway. We will continue to coordinate with civic and homeowners associations, the Nighttime Economy Task Force, the general public, and other interested stakeholders to develop a new approach to the design and management of our county's valuable urban parks and open spaces.

FY15 Budget Preview: The Department of Parks will seek moderate restoration of critical services for Fiscal Year 2015. Restored funding will be aimed at preventing the decline of valuable park assets, at complying with legal mandates (including those related to the Americans with Disabilities Act), and at providing improved service delivery, especially in underserved areas. While the Department understands that the fiscal climate remains challenging, we feel compelled to propose a budget that helps protect highly valuable natural and cultural resources that are important to Montgomery County residents.



Trail Work Volunteers

Corporate Sponsorship: Work continues to develop a system-wide corporate sponsorship program. Representatives from agencies and private entities operating facilities on parkland, including the Recreation Department, the Revenue Authority, the SoccerPlex and others, have been invited to participate. The program will develop customized levels of sponsorship to engage the corporate community and generate incremental revenue to support enhanced activities and programs within our park system. The program will be administered by the Montgomery County Parks Foundation and is anticipated to launch in 2014.

Parks Foundation: As strategic fundraising programs are further implemented, the Foundation intends to focus its efforts on a \$2 million Capital Campaign for Josiah Henson Park, a major gifts

campaign to support enhancements to the Brookside Gardens Master Plan, expanding the Tribute programs throughout the parks (benches, trees, bricks), the corporate sponsorship program, and establishing donation programs to support our Nature Centers.

Innovation: For 2014, our main focus will be making our administrative fleet green. We will replace at least seven of our current conventionally powered fleet vehicles with five plug-in hybrid vehicles and two electric vehicles with a gas generator backup. We will also purchase five electric utility vehicles from Global Electric Motorcars to replace gas and diesel utility vehicles used on our farms and rural areas. As our budget permits, we will order new, clean diesel trucks to add to our fleet. These vehicles utilize clean diesel technology and typically have fewer emissions and 20 percent higher fuel mileage than conventional gasoline engines.

Awards and Recognition

- M-NCPPC was selected by the National Parks and Recreation Association as a *Gold Medal Finalist for Excellence* in Park and Recreation Management Program
- Montgomery Parks and the Department of Recreation won the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP) *Project Excellence Award* for exemplary planning efforts associated with the Vision 2030 and the 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- Meadowside Nature Center designated as a “*Certified Maryland Green Center*” by Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education.
- Montgomery County *Excellence in Recycling Achievement Award* (Individual) recognized Ellen Bennett as chair of Montgomery Parks’ Recycling Committee for organizing staff recycling training sessions, and coordinating paper shredding and recycling events at park facilities.

Parkland Acquisitions

Land Acquired in FY13:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| ▪ North Branch Stream Valley Park, Unit 3 | 5.54 acres |
| ▪ Josiah Henson Special Park | 0.63 acres |
| ▪ Broad Run Stream Valley Park | 43.38 acres |
| ▪ Glenfield Local Park | 3.49 acres |
| ▪ McKnew Conservation Park | 22.90 acres |
| ▪ Fairland Recreational Park | 0.06 acres |
| ▪ Little Bennett Regional Park | 7.84 acres |
| Total Acreage Acquired: | 83.84 acres |

Table 1 Park and Trail Planning Major Projects Schedule

| | 2013 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2014 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|----|----|---|----|------|---|----|---|---|---|------|----|---|----|----|---|----|---|---|----|---|----|
| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
| | FY 13 | | | | | | FY14 | | | | | | FY15 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Countywide Park and Trail Plans | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2012 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan Implementation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Site Selection for Skate Parks, Dog Parks, Community Open Space, Community Gardens, Cricket | | | | | | | | | | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Athletic Field Repurposing Study | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | P | | | | | | | | |
| Service Delivery Strategies: Maintenance Yards, Nature Centers, Park Police Headquarters | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | P | | |
| Urban Park Plans | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Urban Park Guidelines: Amount and Performance Standards | | | | | | | | | | | | | | AP | | | | | | | | | | |
| White Flint: Wall Park Urban Park Concept Plan | | | | | | | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Silver Spring Pilot Urban Dog Park Concept Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | AP | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White Flint: Civic Green Urban Park Concept Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | P | | | | | | |
| Wheaton: Town Square Urban Park Concept Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | |
| Great Seneca Science Corridor: Civic Green Urban Park Concept Plan | | | | | | | | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chevy Chase Open Space Urban Park Concept Plan | | | AP | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trail Plans | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Countywide Park Trails Plan Amendment | | | | | | | | | | | S | | | PH | | AP | | | | | | | | |
| Area Trail Plans (by Service Area priorities) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | I | |
| Regional And Recreational Park Plans | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Northwest Branch Recreational Park MP | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park MP Limited Amendment | | | | | | | | | | | | | I | | S | | PH | | AP | | | | | |
| Wheaton Regional Park MP Limited Amendment | | | | | | | | | | | | | I | | | | | S | | | | PH | | |
| Agricultural History Farm Park Amendment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | I | | | | S | | |
| Park, Trail, and Open Space Recommendations in Planning Department Plans | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Countywide Transit Corridors | | | | | | AP | | | | | | A | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Subdivision Staging/Growth Policy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Minor MP Amendment B – Sandy Spring | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | AP |
| Subdivision Staging/Growth Policy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purple Line Station Area (Long Branch) | | | AP | | | | | | | | | | A | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purple Line Station Area (Chevy Chase Lake) | | | | | | | | | | | A | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Greater Lyttonsville | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bethesda Purple Line at Terminus (Apex) | | | | | | | | | AP | | | | A | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White Oak Science Gateway | | | | | | | | | AP | | | | | | | | | A | | | | | | |
| Glenmont Sector Plan | | | | AP | | | | | | | | | | A | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gaithersburg East/Montgomery Village Sector Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Burtonsville Community Plan | | A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clarksburg – 10 Mile Creek | | | | | | | | | AP | | | | | | | | | A | | | | | | |
| Aspen Hill | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bethesda CBD | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|--|-----------|--------------------------------|
| COLOR KEY | | | STAFF WORK | | ISSUES/OBJECTIVES/OUTREACH REPORT | | STAFF DRAFT |
| P | PLANNING BOARD DISCUSSION | PH | PUBLIC HEARING | I | | AP | PLANNING BOARD APPROVAL |
| | | | | | | A | COUNCIL ADOPTION |

Table 2 Schedule for Major CIP Projects

| Fall 2013 Semi-Annual Report: Schedule for Major CIP Projects | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|--|
| PDF | FY12 | FY13 | FY14 | FY15 | FY16 | FY17 | FY18 | BSY | |
| Battery Lane Urban Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Brookside Master Plan Implementation (Visitor Center & Parking) | | | | | | | | | |
| Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Falls Road Local Park - Parking Lot Design | | | | | | | | | |
| Germantown Town Center Urban Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Greenbriar Local Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Kemp Mill Urban Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Laytonia Recreational Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Little Bennett Day Use Area | | | | | | | | | |
| Magruder Branch Trail Extension | | | | | | | | | |
| M-NCPPC Headquarters Project | | | | | | | | | |
| North Four Corners Local Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Northwest Branch Recreational Park | | | | | | | | | |
| Rock Creek Maintenance Facility | | | | | | | | | |
| Warner Circle Special Park (Facility Plan and Design) | | | | | | | | | |
| Woodlawn Barn Visitors Center | | | | | | | | | |
| Woodside Urban Park | | | | | | | | | |

Design

Construction

Procurement

Major Projects Completed in FY13

Darnstown Square Heritage Park

East Norbeck Local Park

Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park

Little Bennett Campground Parking Lot

Meadowbrook Stable Improvements

Woodstock Equestrian Center

Planning Department

Introduction

In all its work, the Planning Department's mission is to **create communities** that are livable, offer a range of activities, and retain their unique character. We strive to **connect our communities** with transportation options that include transit, bicycle, and pedestrian routes. Each community is unique in its past and future and we strive to **design for sustainability**.

Our plans set out this vision and recommendations to achieve it—including more flexible and innovative zoning tools. Our regulatory work integrates projects into the community as it exists and as it is envisioned. Finally, our planning tools and techniques are constantly updated and examined to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency. The focus must be on planning, zoning and regulatory efforts that are seamlessly aligned to achieve the goals of community building. As we become more successful in aligning these processes, our County's development efforts will become more predictable and more able to fully realize the planning visions.

Finally, as a maturing County, we will continue to move towards finer grain planning of our activity centers, while still managing the larger Countywide systems. Infill and redevelopment efforts require a nuanced and careful planning approach to assure stable neighborhoods. Key to this finer grain planning will be strong community outreach and participation by all stakeholders.



Master Planning Highlights in the Past Six Months

Our plans are the vehicle for establishing a vision of sustainable, unique communities. Each one examines the distinct character of the place and makes recommendations that serve that place and the County as a whole.

One significant force in shaping communities is transportation and with the **Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan**, the County seeks to reconceive expectations for suburban transportation options. This Planning Board draft was delivered to the Council in July 2013. It is a comprehensive update of the Master Plan of Highways, creating a Master Plan of Highways and Transitways that provides a framework for shifting the County's transportation efforts and investment to sustainable and multi-modal options. The focus is on bus rapid transit, but the plan also addresses bike and pedestrian connections, and MARC expansion, to create a connected system of

transportation options that can serve all users. The Council has just held public hearings on the Planning Board Draft in September.

In the down-County, the Purple Line will redefine living and working options and plans underway strive to address that change while retaining community character and opportunity.

The recently approved [Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plan](#) recommends new affordable and market-rate housing, open space, and shops around a planned Purple Line station, while the [Long Branch Sector Plan](#), uses this new transit option as an opportunity to create a community focal point and encourage revitalization. In both communities, design guidelines will establish the standards for community function and amenities.

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At the end of the Metro Red Line, the [Glenmont Sector Plan](#), proposes adding density and development options to take better advantage of Metro. In fact, a recently approved preliminary plan for redevelopment of the Glenmont Metro Center site will add more than 1,500 townhouse and multifamily units along with 90,000 square feet of commercial uses within walking distance of the Metro station. Though submitted under the 1997 Sector Plan, the proposal is consistent with the draft plan's recommendations.

The [White Oak Science Gateway Sector Plan](#) continues the effort to create living, working, and travel options in what are currently auto-centric suburbs. Though the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan area is not on a Metro line, its three proposed neighborhood centers are focused on bus rapid transit stops recommended in the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan currently before the Council. Efforts to create employment options in the East County include spin-off development from FDA and the proposed relocation of Washington Adventist Hospital from Takoma Park to White Oak, which needs a certificate of need (CON) from the State to proceed. The Council has requested that the Planning Department and County Executive work together to identify alternative means to balance new development and public facilities in White Oak. We will be sending a supplement to the plan to the County Council by the end of the year.

Historic Preservation research and designation efforts continue with participation in the Planning Department's master plan process. In the past six months, properties researched and identified are:

- Flower Theater in the Long Branch Sector Plan
- Georgia Avenue Baptist Church, Glenmont Water Tower, Glenmont fire and police stations, and the Glenmont Americana apartments in the Glenmont Sector Plan
- Naval Ordnance Laboratory in the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan.

Not all of these resources were ultimately recommended for designation on the Master Plan for Historic Resources, but the research done adds to the County's knowledge base of its history.

In seven months, Planning staff completed the staff draft and public hearing draft of the [Ten Mile Creek Area Limited Amendment](#). This focused effort sought to balance development with environmental concerns and, even in a short time frame, staff engaged all stakeholders in a useful discussion of options. The Plan's proposals aim to achieve both the community building and environmental protection goals of the 1994 Master Plan. Locating more of the development closer to the historic town center and to the recently approved Cabin Branch project creates more focused and walkable neighborhoods. Concentrating development in a smaller area preserves more environmentally sensitive areas. The Plan also proposes a large conservation park with a natural surface trail accessible to the new neighborhoods that would link Little Bennett and Black Hills Regional Parks. The Council will receive the Planning Board draft in October 2013.

As in Clarksburg, the emphasis of the approved [Burtonsville Sector Plan](#) is to preserve natural resources and agricultural land while creating a center-focused community of mixed uses at a walkable scale. The Plan's recommendations are intended to create a community out of a

crossroads, and the design guidelines underway will help implement that vision with design options specific to the sites at the Burtonsville Crossroads.

New Master Planning Efforts in the Next Six Months

In the coming six months, Planning staff will continue to work on the FY14 approved work program.

No significant changes are being proposed to this work program at this time; however, some adjustments will be discussed as part of the upcoming discussions on the FY15 budget.

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The Purple Line planning effort will continue with the **Bethesda Purple Line Station (BPLS) Minor Master Plan Amendment** and the **Bethesda CBD Plan**. The BPLS Amendment will be before the Planning Board this Fall and its primary mission is to examine alternative station designs that accommodate both the Purple Line and the Capital Crescent trail while providing the most public benefits. This is the opportunity to ensure that light rail, Metro, bus, trail, bikes, and pedestrian systems are integrated to serve the County into future generations.

The BPLS Amendment will be the opening effort for an update of the Bethesda CBD Plan, with a scope for the CBD Plan scheduled to be at the Planning Board in January 2014. An



examination of the CBD will evaluate appropriate heights, density, land use, green space and public spaces in the downtown, the transportation network, and the character and environment in the CBD.

In the next six months the **Sandy Spring Minor Master Plan Amendment** will develop a concept plan for the town center that includes a public green space, the character of MD 108 as the community's main street, as well as the pattern and land uses that will support an active center.

Finally, Planning staff will begin work on the **Aspen Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment** as directed by the County Council. The Amendment's primary purpose is to identify a new land use for the former Vitro headquarters property and smaller adjacent properties. In January 2014, a scope of work will identify issues to be addressed in the plan and a specific timeline for completing the amendment.

Status of Major Mandatory Referrals and Studies

The Planning Department has undertaken a number of efforts that focus on creating transportation choices and communities with diverse living and working options.

Planning staff is coordinating with MTA and County agencies on implementing the Purple Line through monthly meetings of a **Purple Line coordination committee**. As design work proceeds on system segments and as master plans are underway, the group examines and resolves issues to ensure accessibility, safety, and community design. They have focused on the Bethesda CBD, downtown Silver Spring, and 16th Street.

The County has completed its first phase review of **Mid-County Highway (M-83)**. The Planning Board will review the five alternatives, coordinating between Park and Planning staff to analyze the economic, environmental, transportation system, and community building impacts across two planning areas. The Planning Board will send its recommendations regarding the alternatives to MCDOT in November.

Planning staff has and will continue to coordinate with the County on expanding **bikeshare** into Montgomery County. The Planning Department



has helped promote the concept, including bikeshare as a public amenity option in development review, and has completed regulation changes that allow bikeshare as a traffic mitigation strategy. The bicycle “heat map” completed in 2011 helped define effective locations where the potential for bikeshare is greatest. We were pleased to learn recently that the County is planning to install a bikeshare station right outside our headquarters building on Georgia Avenue.

We continue our efforts to incorporate [complete streets](#) into the Road Code, balancing the need for standards that can create connected systems of smart features, transportation options, and environmental benefits, while allowing development flexibility in varied communities.

Planning Staff is also coordinating with the County’s Department of Health and Human Services to highlight the [impacts of planning choices on public health](#). Communities that are walkable, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and provide transit can help create more social interaction and provide active recreation options that support mental and physical health.

Planning staff is incorporating new software and the latest research on transit and walkability into its modeling approaches to ensure that [transportation analysis for regulatory and master plan review](#) reflects the multi-modal system we are striving to build. Highway Capacity Manual analysis has been used for recent master and sector plans and will be used going forward.



To extend sustainability seamlessly into the development process, the [Zoning Rewrite’s](#) largest impact will be making what are now strictly commercial zones into mixed-use zones. The Rewrite also works at the details, including consolidating uses into more manageable categories, provisions for urban farming, expanding the tree canopy, requiring more landscaping in parking lots, and allowing height and setback exceptions for renewable energy facilities.

This Fall, we will receive a consultant report on [industrial land use trends](#) and the implications for industrially zoned land in the County. It will inform Countywide land use recommendations, in view of a steady decline in the stock of industrially-zoned land due to rezonings. It will also help address the perception that including light industrial uses in non-industrial zones will meet the need for industrial land. The findings are timely, given that the proposed White Oak Plan’s recommendations would rezone 16 percent of the County’s remaining industrially zoned ground, including about a third of the remaining I-2-zoned land.

The Planning staff’s participation in the County’s [open data project](#) has provided an opportunity for us to examine our own data resources. In the past six months, Planning staff has participated with other agencies and County departments by providing data on historic resources, master plans, and demographics, hyperlinked to our website.

An expansion of the open data project is another cooperative effort—a [one government portal](#) for map-based data, which would include zoning data from the Planning Department, permit information from the County, and school boundaries from Montgomery County Public Schools. The interagency clearinghouse supports map-enabled analysis for our planning work.

In the coming six months we anticipate approaching our own census and economic data with a fresh eye and new rigor, to ensure that it is up-to-date, accessible, and can be used effectively to inform

planning decisions. Part of that effort will be expanding our capability in **economic analysis**, for example retail supply and demand, to inform master plan decisions.

Regulatory Review Highlights

Implementing the goals of various plans requires sensible but rigorous interpretation of plan recommendations and careful tracking of projects that are approved and underway to ensure that the projects combine to create functional and appealing communities.

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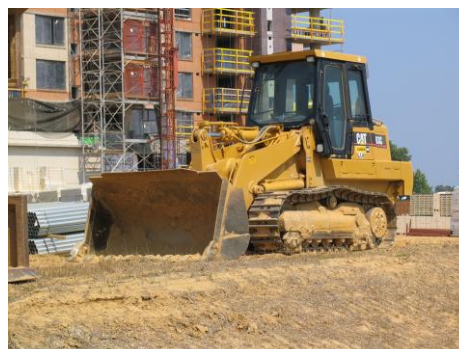
In **Silver Spring** this year, reviewers worked on projects that completed the streetscape along Cameron Street reaching from Spring Street to the Courthouse and beyond to the Metro station. In coming months, the long term planning for the CBD, transit, and public services will come to fruition with the completion of the Silver Spring Library, the Purple Line, and redevelopment of the Fenton Street Baptist Church. This is a coordinated effort between State agencies, local government, and private developers that will extend the energy and success of downtown Silver Spring along Fenton Street. In **Bethesda's** Woodmont Triangle, streetscape and public amenities are also filling in and completing a vibrant mixed use neighborhood with the transit access envisioned by the plan.

As the **Zoning Rewrite** moves closer to completion, staff will interpret the standards to provide a sense of certainty and shared outcomes. Among the changes in the new ordinance, shifting parking from a minimum to a maximum requirement in areas with parking lot districts and refining the requirements for required public open space will help create the communities we need and want.

In other parts of the County, projects reviewed based on master plan goals continue to implement mixed-use communities with living, work, and travel options.

Planning staff is working with Lerner Enterprises on a preliminary plan to redevelop **the White Flint Mall** from an auto-oriented shopping center into a walkable, mixed-use community. The project is a keystone for transforming White Flint as envisioned in the 2010 sector plan, and the approved sketch plan includes Flint Neighborhood Park. A mix of public and private streets will create a walkable street grid within the 45 acre property. One challenge requiring agency coordination is choosing a school site that works for MCPS, the developer, and the community.

Likewise, the **Great Seneca Science Corridor (GSSC)** Master Plan's recommendations are being implemented with numerous residential development projects that add a needed residential component and bring with them public facilities and amenities. Those amenities and facilities follow master plan staging requirements. The **Biennial Master Plan Monitoring Report**, delivered to the Council in August, reports on their delivery in GSSC as well as in White Flint and Shady Grove. It finds that even in an incremental, long-term process, the Plan visions are being implemented; however, key transportation improvements remain to be programmed.



The Planning Department continues to work on integrating strategies for sustainable neighborhood planning into the review of development. During the last six months, the Planning Department has begun to establish principles—placemaking, connections, energy conservation, and natural resources—that will foster the creation of sustainable development at the neighborhood scale during the review process. Recent examples include: Crystal Rock (Lerner property) in Germantown, Qiagen in Germantown, and Cabin Branch in Clarksburg.

Though set aside from development, the [Agricultural Reserve](#) experiences development demands, some of which reduce the opportunity for contiguous and functioning farmland. Staff continues to work with each applicant to ensure that developments are clustered to preserve viable farmland. In addition, staff contributed an agricultural preservation section to the PROS Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and the Department of Recreation, which received a Project Excellence Award from the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP). This project was coordinated with the Agricultural Services Division of the Department of Economic Development. Several staff members helped put together a conference in January, 2013 entitled “Farming at Metro’s Edge,” which examined important issues related to the future of agriculture in Montgomery and Frederick counties and identified a number of important action items.

In support of the County’s agricultural economy, Zoning Rewrite provisions allow agricultural processing in all agricultural and industrial zones and permit developers to purchase TDRs as a public benefit under the CR Zones, even when not required. If the conversion to the Zoning Rewrite is applied countywide, all CR Zones will be required to use BRTs, including redevelopment in Shady Grove, Twinbrook, and the CBDs, further preserving agricultural land.

In [Wheaton](#), notable projects include redeveloping the former First Baptist Church, the Safeway parcel, and the conversion and expansion of a five-story office building on Georgia Avenue (known as the Computer Building). Collectively, these three projects will bring 925 new residential units and a new Safeway to downtown Wheaton. This mix of uses and new residents will help support existing Wheaton businesses and contribute to a lively downtown.



Table 3
Plan Review 2013

| Plan Type | New Submissions | Amendments | Total |
|------------------|-----------------|------------|-------|
| Preliminary Plan | 26 | 30 | 56 |
| Site Plans | 25 | 63 | 88 |
| Project Plans | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| Sketch plans | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Record plats | 155 | 0 | 155 |

In FY 2013, the Planning Board approved 32 development applications, which will add approximately 400,000 square feet of commercial gross floor area and 5,622 residential units to the pipeline. Historic Preservation staff completed 73 [Historic Area Work Permits](#) in the past six months, eight more than the preceding six months. They also processed 39 [Historic Tax Credit](#) applications, representing a \$1.5 million investment in historic properties. We anticipate even higher investment with the Council’s recent approval of expedited Bill 14-13, which raised the County’s tax credit to 25 percent from 10 percent of eligible exterior work.

The Department co-sponsored, with the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a tour of some of Montgomery County's notable mid-century modern residential and commercial architecture. The tour featured the work of internationally renowned architects and award-winning commissions representing a unique architectural resource.

Tools and Techniques

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The Planning Department continues its efforts to improve our tools for turning plans into reality—zoning and development review. We continually work to better communicate with our constituents and inform the ongoing discussion of the County's growth and development.

Our primary effort is [the Zoning Rewrite](#), which was delivered to the Council in May 2013. Since the June public hearing, the PHED Committee has been meeting at least weekly, sometimes more often, working with Planning staff to review the recommendations, which are designed to update and streamline zoning, ultimately delivering the type of sustainable development that will keep the County competitive and a desirable place to live in coming generations.

The PHED Committee has recommended an additional Council public hearing on the Zoning Rewrite documents as they have revised it. The hearing will take place in November, after which the PHED Committee will deliver its recommendations to the full Council for review.

The Zoning Text Advisors, made up of representatives from the Council, the hearing examiner, Board of Appeals, County Attorney's Office, and DPS, have reviewed both the content and application of the zoning recommendations and returned valuable line-by-line comments on their interpretation and application, ensuring a shared and effective process.

A similar examination is underway with the effort to [streamline the development process](#), a coordinated effort between Planning and Executive staff, with input from citizen, utility, and developer representatives. The 67 recommendations developed thus far are being implemented by relevant agencies, and that implementation is being tracked in quarterly meetings.

[EPlans](#) is up and running for preliminary and site plan applications, and September 2, 2013 was our first DRC meeting with all electronic submittals. Eplans continues to roll out, with record plats scheduled to be electronic by December 2013 and NRI-FSD plans to follow.

[Record plats](#) are among one of 67 recommendations being addressed by a multi-agency committee charged with streamlining the development process. The group is working with the MNCBIA to determine the minimal amount of information that should appear on the record plats, making them easier to submit and review. Other streamlining efforts that apply to the Planning Department include completing preliminary and site plan resolutions so they are ready for adoption on the same day the Planning Board reviews the cases, and sending building permit applications for historic properties to HPC then DPS.

We are also addressing our archiving and information sharing responsibilities. A total of 10,774 application files are now digitized—saved and publicly available online from our website.

Using a second Certified Local Government grant, the Historic Preservation staff has gathered information from home energy audits on 11 more historic houses (10 audits were performed in the first grant phase). The goal is to build a database of energy-efficient building and rehabilitation techniques that offer the highest return on investment, valuable sustainability information for homeowners and the County.

Table 4**Digitally Archived Applications, 2011-2013**

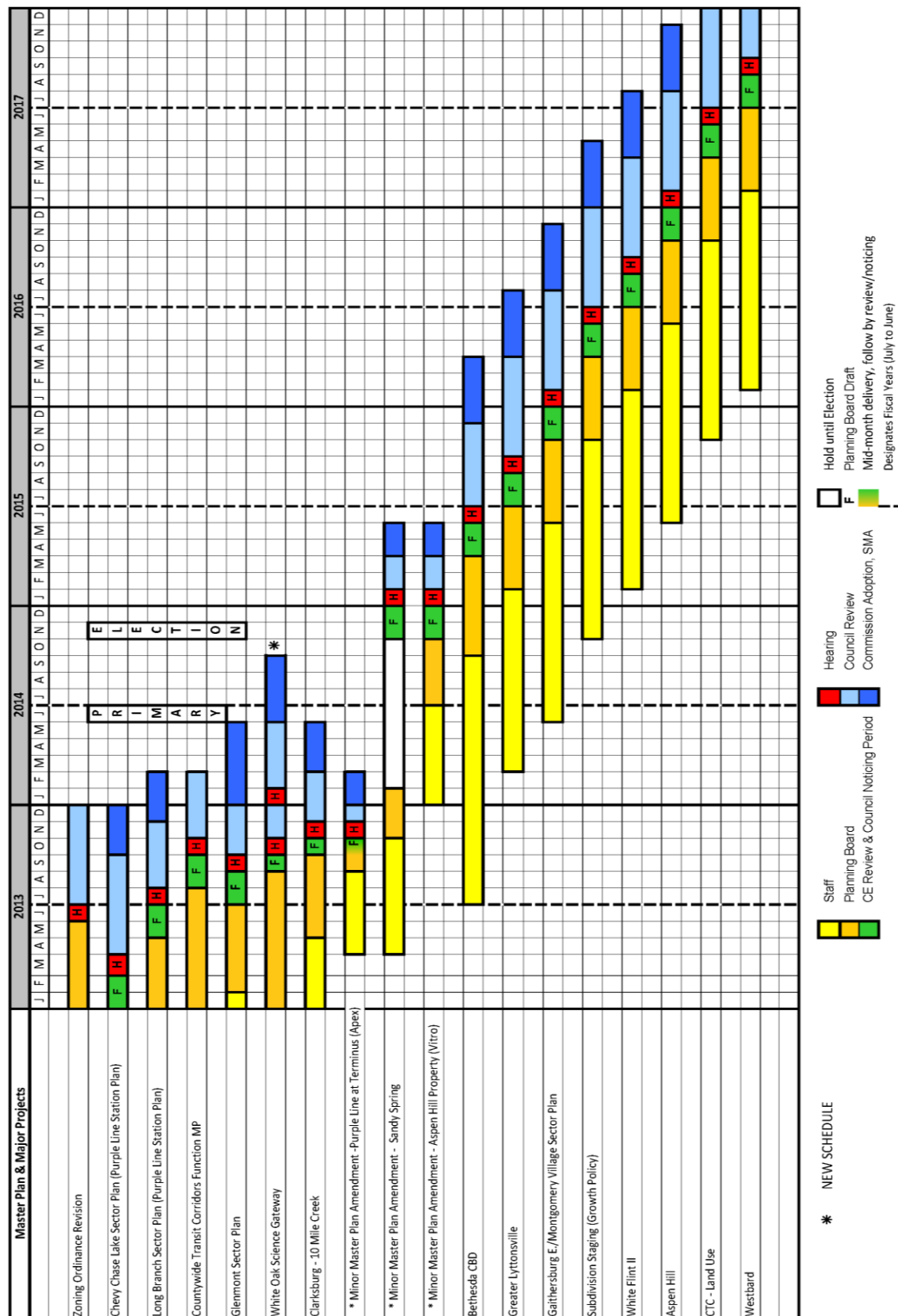
| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Sketch plans | 6 |
| Pre-preliminary plans | 25 |
| Natural resource inventory | 310 |
| Project plans | 40 |
| Preliminary plans | 853 |
| Forest Conservation Plans | 1,034 |
| Forest Conservation Exemptions | 195 |
| Site plans | 690 |
| Total | 2,853 |

Awards and Recognitions

The Planning Department's efforts at quality content and communication have been recognized by a number of awards. We received a State of Maryland Sustainable Growth Award for the White Flint Sector Plan, the first time the State has recognized sustainable development efforts with an award. The recently delivered Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Plan is already being described as a national model

(http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/transportation/2013/08/bus_rapid_transit_improved_buses_are_the_best_route_to_better_transit.html). We've also been recognized with AVA awards for the Montgomery Plans cable show and the Straight Line blog, and with an Apex Award for our total publications program.

Table 5 Master Plan and Major Projects Schedule
As Approved by Council in May 2013 (w/ White Oak revisions)



Semi-Annual Report

Fall 2013



Montgomery County Department of Parks | Montgomery County Planning Department
MontgomeryParks.org | MontgomeryPlanning.org
M-NCPPC Montgomery County