



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

MCPB Item # 1
July 23, 2007

DATE: July 20, 2007

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director, Department of Parks *MB*
Mike Riley, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks *MR*
Doug Alexander, Acting Division Chief, Park Development Division
(PDD) *DA*

FROM: Mary Ellen Venzke, CIP Manager, PDD *MEV*

SUBJECT: Strategy for Preparing the FY09-14 Park Capital Improvements Program

Staff Recommendation

Obtain feedback from the Planning Board on projects being considered for inclusion in the Park FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Background

The Park CIP is a six-year program adopted every two years (biennial). Article 28, Maryland Annotated Code, requires that the Commission submit a six-year CIP to the County Executive and County Council by **November 1st**. Specific staff recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the Board in September/early October. After the Board approves the proposed CIP, a few weeks are devoted to preparing final project text, maps and financial information to prepare project description forms (PDFs) and the cover letter to transmit the CIP by November 1st.

Projects get in the CIP in a variety of ways:

- Park, Area and Functional Master Plans
- Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)
- Approved facility plans
- Citizen requests at public forums, letters etc.
- Studies and reports, e.g. Infrastructure Condition Assessment Report
- Other: staff requests, land acquisitions, developer park donations, public/private partnerships

To date, the Board has had two sessions to discuss the criteria, process and schedule for preparing the FY09-14 Park CIP. Additionally, the Board and Montgomery County Recreation Department held a joint public forum on March 29, 2007 to hear testimony from citizens and advocacy groups. Also, staff has reviewed citizen comments from County CIP public forums held in June by each of the County Executive's five regional government service areas.

What is our CIP Today?

The current Adopted CIP for FY07-12 is a six-year program budget of \$183,266,000. In comparison, the FY05-10 Adopted CIP was \$140,294,000. The current CIP is approximately \$43 million or 31% higher than the previous CIP. A large portion of this increase is attributed to increases in available State Program Open Space funding (POS).

The CIP contains a variety of local (local, urban and neighborhood parks) and non-local (countywide facilities) stand-alone projects, or distinct individual projects that generally were reviewed and approved by the Board as facility plans before the Council was asked to approve construction funds.

The currently adopted stand-alone projects that will continue in the FY09-14 CIP are:

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| 1. Black Hill Trail Renovation and Extension | 11. North Four Corners Local Park |
| 2. Broadacres Local Park Renovation | 12. Pope Farm Nursery Utilities Upgrade |
| 3. Brookside Gardens Irrigation | 13. Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge |
| 4. Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation | 14. South Germantown Recreational Park – Soccer |
| 5. East Norbeck Local Park Expansion | 15. South Germantown Recreational Park – Non-Soccer |
| 6. Elmhirst Parkway Local Park | 16. SilverPlace Project |
| 7. Germantown Town Center Urban Park | 17. Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park |
| 8. Greenbriar Local Park | 18. Wheaton Tennis Bubble Renovations |
| 9. Laytonia Recreational Park | |
| 10. Montrose Trail | |

Attachment ① provides a brief description of these projects.

In addition to stand-alone projects, the CIP includes a variety of level-of-effort projects that generally have a consistent and continuous level of funding from year to year and fund smaller sub-projects that do not require facility planning.

While the Department evaluates and prioritizes the sub-projects within these PDFs for work program planning and justification of funding requests, with a particular focus on the first two years of the program, it maintains the right to revisit and adjust priorities on an on-going basis.

The level-of-effort projects included in the CIP are as follows:

1. Land Acquisition – Local and Non-Local
2. Advanced Land Acquisition Fund
3. Legacy Open Space
4. Ballfield Initiatives
5. Cost Sharing – Local and Non-Local
6. Energy Conservation – Local and Non-Local
7. Enterprise Facilities Improvements
8. Facility Planning – Local and Non-Local
9. Minor New Construction – Local and Non-Local
10. Planned Life Asset Replacements – Local and Non-Local
11. Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds and Lakes
12. Restoration of Historic Structures
13. Resurfacing Parking Lots and Paths – Local and Non-Local
14. Roofs Replacements– Local and Non-Local
15. Small Grants and Donations
16. Stream Protection
17. Trails: Hard Surface Design and Construction and Renovations
18. Trails: Natural Surface Design, Construction and Renovation

Each level-of-effort project contains multiple sub-projects. The sub-projects are prioritized and scheduled in the first two years of the CIP based on need and available funding.

All stand-alone projects and level-of-effort projects in the CIP are grouped and categorized as follows:

Infrastructure Maintenance – *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;*

Environment and Stewardship – *protection and enhancement of natural, historical, and cultural resources on parkland.*

We strive to strike the right balance between categories while crafting the CIP.

Unique Factors that Shape the CIP

As noted above, the current CIP has grown 31% as compared to the prior CIP adopted three years ago. This growth was primarily related to an emphasis and justification for increased spending on infrastructure maintenance, the need to repair damage resulting from the storms of June 2006, increased availability of POS funding, and general inflation on construction prices.

Infrastructure Maintenance

The County Council developed an Interagency Infrastructure Maintenance Task Force to identify infrastructure funding requirements among county agencies. The task force includes Department of Public Works and Transportation, Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery Parks. In March 2005, the task force produced a report that identified gaps in funding. In FY06, approximately \$1.7 million was added to the Park CIP to partially reduce the funding gaps identified. The report also identified that the Department did not have a complete facility inventory and assessment of major infrastructure in its park system. Subsequently, \$150,000 was added to the FY06 budget to begin this effort. The funding for this effort was continued in FY07 and FY08.

In late FY06, the Department of Parks hired an engineering consulting firm to assist the Department in verifying the current inventory and conduct a condition assessment of the inventory. The project establishes criteria for lifecycle replacement of infrastructure in the CIP, and improved standards for preventative maintenance. The information from the reports completed to date will be included in the FY09-14 CIP.

Storm Damage

In June 2006, several major storms passed through Montgomery County resulting in over 10 inches of rainfall. The storms caused major damage throughout the park system. A number of unanticipated projects resulted from the storm -- most notably the Lake Needwood Dam Remediation project to repair the leakage of the dam. Several supplemental appropriations were approved in FY07 to support projects to repair storm damage.

POS Funding

Another major factor that enable the increased CIP work program was the increase in POS funding in FY07. Montgomery County received over \$24 million in POS funding. POS funding fluctuates from year to year. The average funding level for the six-year period prior to FY07 was \$5.3 million. The increased funding in FY07 allowed us to add or accelerate projects within the approved CIP. PDD was able to encumber through the State Board of Public Works **96%** of the total FY07 POS allocation. This is a major accomplishment for the County and could result in continued full funding in future years.

The FY08 POS allocation is approximately \$17.2 million. One half of the allocation or \$8.6 million must be dedicated to land acquisition. Approximately 16% of the total POS allocation, or \$2.8 million, is set aside for the municipalities. The remaining \$5.8 million is available to cover 75% of the costs of development projects that meet POS criteria. The development funding is normally applied to local projects to leverage Park and Planning bond funded projects. Examples of local projects that would qualify for POS funding are: Evans Parkway Local Park and Darnestown Local Park. We project that the annual POS allocation will not be as generous in the upcoming years due to a decline in home sales. Therefore, it is important that we retain some POS funding for future multi-million dollar projects such as Woodstock Equestrian Center, Germantown Town Center and Greenbriar Local Park.

Above and beyond the work program funded in the current CIP, there are three other major work programs that will deliver park facilities outside, or partially outside the funding level of the CIP. They are ICC projects, public/private partnerships, and developer-built parks. Each work program is described below.

ICC Projects

The State Highway Administration (SHA) has contracts in place to design and build the Inter-County Connector (ICC). In recognition of the important resources that will be affected by the construction of the ICC, the State has offered a package of compensatory and stewardship mitigation projects. This package includes a number of community stewardship projects. The projects are:

1. Northwest Branch Regional Park – Llewellyn Fields (see description below)
2. Olney Manor Recreation Park Dog Exercise Area
3. Rock Creek Trail Improvements (TBD)
4. Relocation of National Capital Trolley Museum
5. Woodlawn Barn Renovation (see description below)
6. Northwest Branch Wetland Projects to add forested wetlands

In addition to the community stewardship projects, there are more than 40 environmental stewardship projects. These projects will primarily address existing watershed concerns by restoring stream beds and retrofitting inadequate stormwater management systems.

Public/Private Partnerships

A number of potential capital projects come to the Department as a result of public/private partnerships. Quite often these projects are not planned or programmed in the existing CIP. Examples of some of the larger partnership projects in process are the SilverPlace Headquarters and Mixed-use Project, and additional facilities under consideration at Woodstock Equestrian Center. Both of these projects will likely result in substantial commitments of funding in the upcoming CIP.

Projects at Woodstock Equestrian Center

Staff is preparing a facility plan for the next stage of development consisting of two outdoor rings and additional parking areas on the east side of the park and a cross-country/eventing course and parking facility on the west side of the park.

The projects funded in the current CIP are:

1. Replacement of the vehicular bridge on the west side of the park scheduled to begin in Spring 2008.
2. Installation of two equestrian bridges on the east side of the park scheduled for completion in Fall 2007.
3. Stabilization of the Historic Seneca Stone Barn on the far west side of the park is projected to begin in Spring 2008.

Developer-Built Parks and Park Facilities

A number of projects also come to the Department through the development review process. The development of Clarksburg has initiated a number of recent projects. Park Development Division staff performs the technical review and construction inspection of these projects. Examples of these projects include the Clarksburg Greenway, Dowden's Ordinary Special Park, Greenway Village (Arora Hills) Local Park, Piedmont Woods Park, Cabin Branch Local Park, and new facilities at Kings Local Park, Battery Lane and Elm Street Urban Parks. In addition, two new urban parks will be built by Montgomery County on behalf of WMATA as replacement for the existing park at the Silver Spring Metro station, which will be displaced by the construction of the new Transit Center. Staff will continue to play an important role in overseeing the design and construction for these areas and in negotiating the necessary agreements with the County, WMATA and the Urban District.

Status of Preparing the FY09-14 Parks CIP

We received over 250 requests from the new on-line CIP request system and requests from the public. We have reviewed and begun to prioritize these requests based on the Board approved criteria for ***Immediacy, Need, and Efficiency***.

The Park CIP process is a comprehensive effort that includes many of the departmental divisions. We have established a Departmental Evaluation Committee to prioritize projects for inclusion in the six year CIP. This group held its first meeting on July 10th and will meet again throughout July and August to discuss and evaluate projects. The group will make recommendations for future facility plans that will ultimately shape future capital improvement programs.

As we develop the CIP, we will collect operating budget impact data (OBI) resulting from potential CIP projects. We are currently scheduling projects and sub-projects in the six-year CIP based on affordability and resources, and will present a recommended CIP for the Board to evaluate and approve during work sessions in September and October.

Potential New Stand-alone CIP Projects

Generally, projects that have completed facility plans approved by the Board become stand-alone projects in the next CIP cycle. Since the FY07-12 CIP was adopted, the following facility plans have been approved by the Board and are ready for inclusion in the FY09-14 CIP:

1. **Rock Creek Sewer System – (Infrastructure Maintenance)**

In June 2006, the Board approved a facility plan for restoration and improvements to the on-site sewer line serving east-side Lake Needwood facilities within Rock Creek Regional Park. The existing sewer system, built in the 1960's, serves the visitors center, three bathhouses, and the maintenance facility. The facility plan generated innovative, economical and environmentally sensitive options for the restoration and re-design of the sewer lines. The alternative selected will replace the existing system with a new alignment along the park road.

Cost Estimate: \$1.4 million

2. **Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park – (Infrastructure Maintenance, Environmental and Stewardship, and New Facilities)**

In January 2007, the Board approved a facility plan to refurbish the existing 40 year-old park that incorporates 2.46 acres acquired in 2005 with the 5 acres of the existing park. This neighborhood park is located on Georgia Avenue and Evans Parkway, in Silver Spring. The facility plan includes the naturalization of the existing concrete channel for stormwater management, a boardwalk and paved pedestrian loop, gazebos, garden areas, 2 half-court basketball courts, additional parking spaces, and the replacement of play equipment.

Cost estimate: \$3.5 million

3. **Woodlawn Barn Visitors Center – (Environment and Stewardship)**

In June 2003, the Planning Board approved a Feasibility Study and Development Plan for the Woodlawn Visitor's Center. This project will convert the historic barn to a visitor's center with a focus on the Underground Railroad and the Quaker experience in Montgomery County. Design funding is included in the Restoration of Historic Structures project. We will transfer approximately \$800,000 from that project and receive an additional \$1.9 million in State funds from the ICC mitigation to renovate the barn as a visitor's center. The facility will be the model for future interpretive historic sites.

Cost Estimate: \$2.7 million

In addition to the approved facility plans noted above, there are a few additional facility plans that are scheduled for Board approval in September, therefore, would be potential candidates for stand-alone projects in the CIP. These projects are as follows:

1. **Darnestown Square Urban Park – (New Facilities)**

Darnestown Square Urban Park is a 0.6-acre tract of undeveloped parkland located on a triangular-shaped parcel situated on Route 28 near the intersection with Seneca Road.

In November of 1995, the park property was received in dedication from Darnestown Limited Partnership, the adjacent property owner/developer. Area residents requested that the property be dedicated for community use as a park for their town center and as a condition of approval for initial development of the Darnestown Shopping Center (Seneca Highlands). Representatives from the Darnestown Civic Association further requested that M-NCPPC develop the park into a focal point for their community to provide seating areas, space for community gatherings, and to showcase local heritage.

A facility plan will be presented to the Board for review in September 2007. The facility plan recommends that the site include:

- Historical interpretation of the town, the on-site graveyard, and local Civil War events;
- Inviting and useable spaces;
- An attractive and noticeable landmark along Route 28;
- Opportunities for public art;
- Safe pedestrian and bicycle visitor access;
- Maintenance access and sustainable landscaping.

Cost estimate: \$918,000

2. **Falls Road Local Park & Hadley's Playground – (Infrastructure Maintenance and New Facilities)**

This project is an expansion of the existing parking lot at Falls Road Local Park. The existing parking area is inadequate to accommodate the high volume of park patrons. This project may include the replacement of a safety surface under the playground (Hadley's Playground) if that project is not funded earlier within the planned lifecycle asset account for playgrounds. This park is a very popular park, mostly due to the Hadley's playground that was specifically designed for children with disabilities. Often busloads of children are brought from the County's special education centers to the park. The facility plan is scheduled to go before the Board in September 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$1,144,000

3. **Magruder Branch Trail – (New Facilities)**

This project will add 1.1 mile of hard surface trail to the 3.1 mile trail that begins in Damascus Recreational Park and travels north to Valley Park Drive. This project will extend the trail to the Damascus Town Center. The trail travels through a wooded stream valley and includes 1,200 feet of boardwalk and two bridges through sensitive areas, as well as road crossing improvements at Bethesda Church Road. The facility plan is scheduled to be presented to the Board in September 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$2.2 Million

4. **Northwest Branch Recreational Park (Llewellyn Fields)- (New Facilities)**

The Llewellyn Fields Sports Complex is a Community Stewardship Project for the Inter-County Connector that includes new ballfields and amenities to address replacement of existing ballfields. Access to these replacement fields will be provided directly off Norbeck Road. This is a joint development project of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and Department of Parks.

The proposed facilities include 5 lighted and irrigated ballfields including one (1) full sized baseball field, three (3) soccer fields, and one (1) football field. Other planned facilities include one (1) large playground, approximately 2 miles of looped perimeter hiker-biker trails, one (1) picnic shelter, picnic areas, one (1) restroom, reforestation areas, and an interpretative area/kiosk for the adjacent Rachel Carson Greenway trail. The design and amenities included in this park are still under negotiation with SHA. It is likely this park will be built in phases. If additional design funds are need in FY08, this project could likely be an FY08 supplemental appropriation request. The project is scheduled to be presented to the Board in November 2007.

Cost Estimate: TBD

5. **Wheaton Tennis Ancillary Building – (Infrastructure Maintenance and New Facilities)**

The Wheaton Tennis Bubble Renovation project was approved in the FY07-12 CIP. That project included funding for a facility plan for the ancillary frame building adjacent to the tennis bubble, housing the entrance, pro shop and restrooms. The existing facilities lack adequate office space and waiting and viewing areas. The existing ancillary building would be demolished and rebuilt with new restrooms, entrance way, pro shop, storage facilities, and new viewing and waiting areas for patrons. The facility plan is scheduled to go before the Board in September 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$1.8 million

6. **North Four Corners Local Park (Revised) – (Infrastructure Maintenance and New Facilities)**

North Four Corners Local Park is a 13.9-acre park located near the commercial node of Four Corners in Silver Spring. The Board approved the facility plan for this project in September 2005. The Plan provided improvements to the new, undeveloped six-acre park tract including the following: rectangular sports field, 50 space parking area with vehicular access from University Boulevard, a playground, a Class I bikeway from University Boulevard to Southwood Avenue, paved loop walkways, a plaza with seating areas and amenities, portable toilets, fencing, landscaping, and storm water management facilities. The existing 7.9-acre park area would be renovated to provide additional parking, a renovated field, trail connections, underground stormwater management facilities, landscaping and other minor improvements. At the direction of the County Council, staff is studying alternatives to the approved facility plan. Staff will recommend that the existing PDF be re-approved. The amended facility plan is scheduled to be presented to the Board in November.

Cost Estimate: \$5-6 million

7. **Lake Needwood Dredging – (Infrastructure Maintenance and Environmental and Stewardship)**

This project is being designed as part of the Pollution Prevention and Pond Repairs level- of-effort project. This project was part of a functional plan written in 2005 for the lake's use as a recreational amenity, as well as lakeshore facilities. This project does not require a formal facility plan; however, staff will provide the Board with a detailed briefing on the preliminary engineering for the project in the fall. Staff will present the design concept to the community prior to Board presentation. The complete design and implementation plan would remove approximately 100,000 cubic yards of sediment from the forebay and upper reaches of the main lake, install structural improvements within the forebay to facilitate sediment collection, establish new shoreline protection along the upper lake, and deposit the sediment off-site.

Lake Needwood provides much needed fishing, boating, and shoreline picnic areas for public enjoyment in the mid-County area and Countywide. In addition, the Lake provides an important function for flood control, stormwater management, sediment and erosion control, and downstream water quality. Lake Needwood is a valued hydrological resource and recreational amenity for the County, and preservation of this resource is dependent on dredging the Lake to remove existing sediment and addressing further siltation. In addition to restoring the Lake for recreational use, a major objective for the dredging project is to assess the present and future function and management of the lake for flood control, stormwater management, sediment and erosion control, and downstream water quality.

Cost Estimate: \$3.5 million

Potential Modifications to Level-of- Effort Projects

- **Restorations of Historic Structures** - increase level-of-effort to implement the approved historical work program priorities
- **Minor New Construction** - increase level-of-effort funding to implement more projects that do not require stand-alone PDFs
- **Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement projects** - increases in these projects will help us implement projects resulting from Infrastructure Condition Assessment and Bridge Inspection initiatives.

Process for Approval of the FY09-14 CIP

We have requested two work sessions in September and two in October (if needed) to review and approve the FY09-14 CIP. We will present the six-year program in stages.

1. Level-of-effort projects and recommended funding levels
2. Continuing projects previously approved in the FY07-12 CIP with no major changes
3. Continuing projects previously approved in the FY07-12 CIP, which may have significant delays or changes in scope or costs.
4. New stand-alone projects that are ready for inclusion in the new CIP.

Conclusion

Staff seeks feedback from the Planning Board on the priorities and projects being considered in the Proposed Parks FY09-14 CIP.

Continuing Projects from FY07-12 CIP

	Project Name	Location	Description	Estimate in FY07-12	Status
1	Black Hill Trail Renovation & Extension	Germentown	Widen existing 2.3 mile paved trail; pave existing natural surface trail 1.2 miles to parking area.	\$4,105,000	75% Design
2	Broadacres Local Park Renovation	Silver Spring	Renovate existing facilities and add new multi-use court, trail, park entrance, and convert one softball field to a multi-purpose field.	\$1,212,000	90% Design
3	Brookside Gardens Irrigation	Silver Spring	Redesign of water distribution system.	\$1,405,000	90% Design
4	Brookside Gardens Master Plan Impl.	Silver Spring	New entry way, expand parking lot, and upgrade SWM.	\$661,000	15% Design
5	E. Norbeck Local Park Expansion	Norbeck	Add parking, paths & trails, picnic pavilion, restrooms, lighted courts, and reconstruct ballfields.	\$3,394,000	60% Design
6	Elmhirst Parkway Local Park	Bethesda	New facilities will replace an existing nearby community park built 50 years ago in an environmentally sensitive area.	\$478,000	5% Design
7	Germentown Town Center Urban Park	Germentown	New park with interpretive trails & boardwalk, pavilion, and water features. Design only approved.	\$1,064,000	FY08 Design
8	Greenbriar Local Park	Potomac	New park with playing field, basketball and volleyball courts, playground, paths, gazebo, parking, portable toilets.	\$3,755,000	FY10 Design
9	Laytonia Recreational Park	Gaithersburg	New park with complex of four lighted, irrigated baseball fields; basketball courts; restrooms; press box.	\$9,822,000	Partnership RFP
10	Montrose Trail	N. Bethesda	10-ft. wide h-b trail connection to DPWT's Montrose Pkwy West trail.	\$649,000	FY09 Design
11	N. Four Corners Local Park	Silver Spring	Renovation of existing park; design & construction of new facilities on 6-acre addition.	\$6,122,000	Amended Facility Plan
12	Pope Farm Nursery Utilities Upgrade	Gaithersburg	New water line and irrigation system; new sewer connection.	\$1,543,000	100% Design
13	Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge	Aspen Hill	Pedestrian bridge over Veirs Mill Road to connect Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail near Aspen Hill Road.	\$6,328,000	90% Design
14	S. Germentown Rec. Park Non-Soccer	Germentown	Dairy barn conversion to a museum.	\$298,000	100% Design
15	S. Germentown Rec. Park SoccerPlex	Germentown	Relocate softball field C as part of Phase II	\$1,117,000	10% Design
16	SilverPlace	Silver Spring	Planning & design for new Commission Headquarters Building and mixed-use development on existing MRO site.	\$850,000	15% Design
17	Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park	Takoma Park	New paths, entrance plaza, parking lot, picnic shelter and playground; replace basketball courts and existing playground; convert existing tennis courts to a skateboard facility.	\$3,484,000	25% Design
18	Wheaton Tennis Bubble Renovations	Wheaton	New tennis bubble cover, liner, HVAC and lights.	\$1,878,000	20% Construction