



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

MCPB Date: 10/13/2016  
Agenda Item #7

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 6, 2016

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *MR*  
Mitra Pedoem, Deputy Director of Administration *Mitra Pedoem*  
Shuchi Vera, Chief, Management Services Division *S.V.*

FROM: Nancy Steen, Budget Manager, Management Services Division *Nancy C. Steen*

SUBJECT: Department of Parks FY18 Park Fund Proposed Operating Budget

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**Staff Recommendation**

Approval to prepare the FY18 Park Fund operating budget at the Base Budget plus New Initiatives level.

**Background**

At its September 15 meeting, the Planning Board received a presentation from the Central Administrative Services (CAS) staff on the FY18 budget process including key trends and the budget outlook, strategy, and timeline.

CAS reported that the assessable base for Montgomery County continued to grow by 13% from FY13-FY17 gradually continuing to reverse the declining trends that were encountered in FY11-FY13. The Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimates that the assessable base will grow by 5% in FY18. While this growth will provide an increase in property tax revenue for the Park Fund, the increase will not be sufficient to meet our projected needs without an increase in the Park tax rate. However, the County Council can approve any expenditure level for the Park Fund that it desires, and then have the Park Fund tax rate set accordingly without requiring an increase in the overall property tax rate.

The Planning Board then provided general guidance for developing the FY18 Budget with the recognition that the Department of Parks has mandated requirements and other essential needs to operate our park system. The Board asked that we request what is needed to provide the services that the Planning Board and the County Council have requested of us, being cognizant of the County's fiscal challenges and the likely impact that these challenges will have on our eventual budget. The Planning Board also emphasized that any requests for new initiatives and/or critical needs be well described and justified.

### **Known Increases**

At the September 15 meeting, CAS provided preliminary estimates for increases associated with the Park Fund for salaries, benefits, retirement, Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), and debt service on general obligation bonds. At that meeting, the estimated increase for salary, benefits, and retirement was \$4,120,325 (a 4.5% overall budget increase). After further review of our personnel projections, we have lowered that projected increase to be \$3,498,171, a 3.8% budget increase. Our debt service increase on general obligation bonds is currently estimated at \$664,241. Staff is currently reviewing the projections for bond sales associated with the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, so the anticipated debt service increase is still being finalized. As we move through the budget process, we will continue to refine these totals before submitting our final proposed budget request.

The Department of Parks also has known inflationary, contractual, and mandated increases as well as increases for operating budget impacts (OBI) for CIP projects and developer built parks. These increases total \$1,277,712 (1.4% over the FY17 adopted budget). Additional information on these increases is provided later in this memo.

The increase in major known commitments totals \$5,440,124 which is a 6.0% increase over the FY17 adopted budget.

### **Budget Preparation**

To prepare for the October 13 Planning Board meeting, Parks staff worked diligently over the past three months identifying deficiencies in our work program as well as looking at emerging trends to determine the needs of the future. A number of requests were received from the divisions, and the Director and Deputy Directors reviewed each division's programs and narrowed them down to the most important ones that addressed the top priorities of the Department. The funding required for the new initiatives requests totals \$1,953,965 and includes 14 positions.

### **Budget Summary**

After the review of our Major Known Commitments as well as the New Initiatives that we are proposing, the total increase being requested by our Department for FY18 is **\$7,394,089, an 8.1%** increase over the FY17 budget. Of that total, \$586,223 is related to the Water Quality Protection Fund (WQPF), and if approved, will be offset by increased revenue from that Fund. A summary is included on the next page with additional detail provided on subsequent pages.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS  
PRELIMINARY FY18 OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST**

	FY17 Adopted Budget	\$	91,393,404	% Change	# of Positions
<b>FY18 BASE BUDGET INCREASES</b>					
Salary/Benefit increases including salary marker for Merit/COLA *			1,897,568		
Retirement			1,600,603		
OBI			109,541		
Minimum Wage Impact			32,794		
Contractual Increases			273,579		
Utilities/Telecommunications Costs			77,495		
Inflationary Increases for Supplies and Materials, Services and Capital Outlay			159,204		
Debt Service for Internal Service Fund Capital Equipment			617,500		
Removal of one-time funding from FY17 for purchase of body worn cameras			(132,000)		
Chargebacks			102,725		
Water Quality Fund - Marker for Merit/COLA and Contractual Increase			36,874		
Transfer to Debt Service		\$	664,241		
<b>Subtotal Increase - Base Budget Request</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>5,440,124</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	
<b>PROPOSED CHANGES - NEW INITIATIVES</b>					
Activating Urban Parks			125,000		
Improving Quality and Playability of Ballfields			625,463		4.0
Meeting Legislative Mandates			105,741		1.0
Maximizing Operational Efficiency and Reliability			261,143		3.0
Enhancing and Expanding the Trail System			212,269		2.0
Cultivating the Next Generation of Park Leaders and Workers			75,000		
<b>Subtotal Proposed Changes (excl WQPF)</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>1,404,616</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	
Water Quality Fund			549,349	0.6%	4.0
<b>Total Increase FY18 Proposed Budget Request</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>7,394,089</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>Total FY18 Proposed Budget Request</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>98,787,493</b>		

\* Total excludes OPEB

**KNOWN OPERATING COMMITMENTS**

The preliminary known increases in the Park Fund for salaries, benefits, retirement, Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), and debt service on general obligation bonds were reviewed by CAS at the September 15 meeting, and our revised updates are included in the summary above.

Information regarding the known operating commitments for OBI, mandated, contractual, and inflationary increases for Park operations is provided below.

While we have received some of the FY18 estimates for Commission-wide expenses from CAS, we are still waiting for the adjustments for expenses for the Departmental chargebacks to the Park Fund for CAS services. The Department of Finance expects to provide this information by the end of October or early in November in the Schedule of Fees and Charges. Therefore, the Department of Parks has not included any increases for these expenses in this initial proposed FY18 budget.

The chart below outlines the increases for known operating commitments with detailed information about each line item provided in the following narrative.

<b>FY18 Park Fund Base Budget Known Operating Commitments</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Positions/Workyears</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Operating Budget Impact (OBI)	Seasonal	1.9 Workyears	\$109,541	0.1%
Increases Associated with Legislative Mandates (Minimum Wage Increase)	Seasonal		\$32,794	0.0%
Contractual Increases			\$273,579	0.3%
Utilities/Telecommunications			\$77,495	0.1%
Inflationary Increases for Supplies and Materials, Services, and Capital Outlay			\$159,204	0.2%
Debt Service for Internal Service Fund Capital Equipment			\$617,500	0.7%
Removal of One-Time Funding from FY17 (Body Worn Cameras for Park Police)			(\$132,000)	-0.1%
Chargebacks to CIP and Enterprise Fund	Career	1 Workyear	\$102,725	0.1%
Position Changes		0.5 Workyears	\$0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.4 Workyears</b>	<b>\$1,240,838</b>	<b>1.4%</b>

**Operating Budget Impacts (OBI)**

Operating Budget Impacts (OBI) are the costs associated with the operating, maintaining and policing of new and expanded parks. If we do not get additional resources each year to care for new facilities, it equates to an incremental reduction in service level as existing resources must be spread across a larger work program. Much of the land is acquired and developed through the CIP, while some is obtained through partnerships and developer dedicated parks and amenities. New and expanded park facilities require additional operating, maintenance, and safety resources.

The staffing and non-personnel impacts of the projects expected to be completed in or before FY18 total \$109,541. Of this amount, \$150,000 is for a one-time expense for Capital Outlay for FY18 which is offset by the reversal of one-time expenses of \$259,650 that were allocated for Capital Outlay in FY17. This OBI funding amount is ostensibly approved when the CIP budget is approved.

The chart below details the added resources necessary to implement completed CIP and non-CIP work programs associated with new or expanded park infrastructure.

Project Name	FY18 OBI Expenditures	FY18 Seasonal Workyears
<b>CIP PROJECTS</b>		
Brookside Gardens Greenhouse	\$75,705	0.4
Western Grove Urban Park *	\$26,261	0.3
Laytonia Recreational Park **	\$2,974	1.1
<b>NON-CIP PROJECTS</b>		
Poplar Run Trail	\$4,601	0.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$109,541</b>	<b>1.9</b>

\* Received partial year funding in FY17. Additional funding in FY18 is for annualization of that initial funding.

\*\* Received partial year funding in FY17 for this project. Additional funding in FY18 is for annualization of that initial funding. The FY18 total is net of the reversal of one-time funding from FY17 in the amount of \$259,650.

A description of each OBI project is included in Appendix A.

**Legislative Mandates – \$32,794**

Chapter 27, Article XI of the Montgomery County Code includes phased in increases of minimum wage rates. Our Department requires additional funding of \$32,794 in the Park Fund for seasonal staff rate adjustments based on the mandated increase to the wage rates.

**Contractual Obligations for CPI Increases - \$273,579**

The Department has a variety of contracts with known escalation clauses built in such as maintenance services, tree removal services, custodial services, office services, software maintenance/licensing fees, insurance premiums, and an energy consultant.

**Utilities/Telephone – \$77,495**

The FY18 budget for utilities/telephone is increasing by \$77,495. Costs for telecommunications services continue to climb due to contractual price increases associated with expanding wireless capabilities and increasing use of Smartphones that are needed to run our operations and to better serve the public. Costs for electricity and natural gas continue to decrease due to favorable contractual pricing. However, that cost savings is offset by rising water and sewer cost attributable to increased rates and fees.

**Inflationary Increases for Supplies and Materials, Services and Capital Outlay - \$159,204**

The Department of Parks is requesting to increase the supplies and materials, non-contractual services and capital outlay by \$159,204 or 0.2% over the FY17 Adopted Budget to keep up with inflation and increased costs for vehicle parts, maintenance equipment and supplies, office equipment and supplies, horticultural supplies, and other miscellaneous supply items.

**Debt Service for Internal Service Fund (ISF) Capital Equipment - \$617,500**

The Department of Parks purchases equipment through the internal service fund (ISF) which finances equipment costing more than \$10,000 that has a life expectancy of greater than six years (the length of the financing term). The Department ISF funding covers large pieces of equipment including work trucks, construction equipment, large mowers, and computer and information technology system upgrades.

The Planning Board approves these purchases by approving the debt service payment each fiscal year. The amount of equipment purchased was at the \$1.75 million level per year for FY08-FY15. In FY16, the amount was increased to \$1.85M and then to \$2.4M in FY17. Even with this gradual increase, the Department is not keeping pace with inflation and with its needs.

Our Department has a large backlog of equipment and vehicles deemed as being past their useful life. Approximately \$1M of our vehicles and \$3.2M of our equipment currently exceed all three of the recommended ceilings for age, mileage, and maintenance costs. Although we continue to replace vehicles and equipment each year, our funding continues to lag relative to our needs. With limited purchasing ability since FY09, the Department has used the equipment available to them or done without. Some of the equipment is old, outdated, not the correct type or size for the task, and not efficient. The continued use of older equipment increases repair costs, increases downtime which results in lost productivity, decreases reliability and may compromise operator and public safety. Also, as equipment ages, models change and parts become difficult or impossible to find. Newer equipment is often greener, safer, and more efficient.

The Department of Parks requests to increase the ISF equipment purchases from \$2,400,000 to \$5,400,000 with a commensurate increase in the associated debt service payment. The total debt service amount for FY18 of \$617,500 incorporates the proposed \$3M increase to our approved spending level. This increased funding will provide for the following items:

- \$450,000 (total cost is \$900,000 which will be split with the Planning Department) for replacement of the IT backbone infrastructure needed to improve the foundation for communication with all systems including e-mail, Office 365, GIS and all other applications. The IT infrastructure backbone provides the foundation for all data transport within and external to the organization. Effectively, it is a digital superhighway providing a path for exchange of information. This backbone replacement consists of hardware, including routers and switches, and software, operating systems, layers of communication protocols, and security components. This backbone replacement includes the latest technology that will be used in the new Wheaton headquarters by all co-located County agencies and is our first step toward our migration of the IT infrastructure to the new headquarters.
- \$50,000 (total cost is \$100,000 which will be split with the Planning Department) for a Gen9 database server with SSD drives. This server will replace an older GIS database server and will greatly improve the performance, reliability and expandability of the centralized GIS database that serves both Montgomery Parks and Planning. This resource unifies inputs from many sources into a single source for information across disciplines and other information systems. Because the use of GIS has exploded internally and the web offerings have also increased, the demands on our centralized database have increased. This new server will greatly increase speed by enabling Oracle Database in memory.
- \$100,000 for Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) which involves hosting a desktop operating system within a Virtual Machine (VM) running on a centralized server. This will enhance staff's ability to seamlessly access their networks and desktops anytime, from anywhere, on any device.
- \$30,000 for expansion of wireless access for customers visiting our parks.
- \$928,000 for equipment and vehicles associated with New Initiative requests.
- \$3,842,000 for replacement of older vehicles and equipment that have exceeded their useful life cycle.

To keep the FY18 request as low as possible, Parks is asking for an increase in ISF equipment funding so that the payment is spread out over six years rather than absorbing the full cost this year if we requested capital outlay funding.

The other way that the Department purchases equipment is through capital outlay funds which are used for equipment that costs more than \$10,000 and has a life expectancy of less than six years. This equipment is purchased through the operating fund. Each year, some one-time capital outlay funding is approved for OBI or mandates such as NPDES, but this does not address the equipment deficiencies facing the Parks. The capital outlay funding for FY17 is \$714,650 with an increase in FY18 of \$54,900 associated with requests for NPDES and OBI funding.

#### **Position Changes - \$0 and 0.5 workyears**

The Department is requesting to convert a part time (PT) career position to a full time (FT) career position at Meadowside Nature Center. This position is currently a Park Naturalist II within the Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education Division. After conducting a needs assessment, it was determined that the divisional needs will be best met by modifying the position to be a FT Park Naturalist I. With this change in grade, the position can be converted from PT to a FT position for no additional cost. This FT position will support programs, camps and animal care at this location. This site is responsible for several permanently injured owls, hawks, and a Bald Eagle that are managed under State and Federal permits and guidelines. More work hours are needed to assist with Raptor care and management. In addition, increasing the hours worked will facilitate communication among staff and will increase the capacity to provide nature programs at the site.

The Department is also requesting to convert a Landscape Construction Inspector term contract position in the Park Development Division to a FT career position. This position will provide specialized inspection of our projects to ensure that soil preparation, amendments, irrigation, turf, and landscape planting requirements of contracts are being met. This position will also be responsible for monitoring landscape maintenance work required under landscape establishment and extended warranty periods of projects. This position provides specialized expertise and would help improve the delivery of new and renovated athletic fields and landscaped areas in parks. This position will be partially funded within the CIP, and the additional funding required to convert this position from term contract to career will be offset by an increase in the CIP chargeback so that there will be no impact to the operating budget for this conversion.

#### **NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) - \$586,223**

The Department of Parks received its first National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Small Separate Storm Sewer System (NPDES MS4) permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment in the spring of 2010. The purpose of this permit, which is based in the Federal Clean Water Act, is to reduce stormwater pollution coming from impervious surfaces and thereby improve water quality. The permit requires the Department to develop Best Management Practices for each of the six Minimum Control Measures which include: Personnel Education and Outreach, Public Involvement and Participation, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Construction Site Runoff Control, Post Construction Stormwater Management, and Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping. Although the Department was required to obtain this permit and fulfill its requirements, no federal or state funds were available to offset this mandate.

Accordingly, in FY12 the Department was appropriated \$1.5 million from the Montgomery County Water Quality Protection Fund to offset costs associated with ongoing water quality related work across M-NCPPC's 37,000-acre park system and implementation of the Department's new NPDES MS4 permit. Ongoing water quality related work includes maintenance and management of streams, lakes, non-tidal wetlands, and stormwater management facilities as well as the implementation of the Department's NPDES industrial permit for its 12 maintenance yards. As requirements have continued to increase, the amount has also gradually increased each year accordingly to the FY17 budgeted amount of \$2,817,413.

While many improvements have been initiated under the permit, deficiencies still remain in the Post Construction Stormwater Management measure. These constraints continue to pose challenges in meeting the requirements of the new NPDES MS4 permit and are the basis of the Department's new FY18 NPDES MS4 related budget initiatives listed below.

<b>Minimum Control Measure - Post Construction Stormwater Management Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Lead Division(s)</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>New Positions/ Workyears</b>
<p>Our maintenance demands continue to increase for specialized stormwater management structures and our current staff is not sufficient to meet this increased demand. This maintenance requires specialized skills and knowledge and requires career staff levels of consistency and expertise. These positions will perform work on stormwater management across all management areas within the Divisions. These positions will focus on routine and specialized maintenance of stormwater management and bioretention areas as well as data collection related to stormwater management maintenance. This proposed total also includes funding for supplies, services, and one-time funding for vehicles.</p>	<p>Northern Parks and Southern Parks</p>	<p>\$273,806</p>	<p>2.0 FT Career Positions</p>
<p>Purchase of a mini excavator for the stormwater management crew for debris removal from risers and outflows. Most debris jams are larger than what can be accomplished safely and efficiently using manual labor. The ability to clear jams will reduce the potential for damage to critical structures and stream banks protecting infrastructure and natural resources. The use of this equipment will reduce labor cost for this particular type of work by accomplishing it more efficiently. Hours of labor that are saved can then be directed towards other routine preventative maintenance to try and meet industry standards. This is a one-time funding request.</p>	<p>Northern Parks and Southern Parks</p>	<p>\$60,000</p>	
<p>In FY16, the Volunteer Services Office coordinated 73 Trail work days and 261 stream clean ups. The primary limiting factor in engaging more individuals to assist in this support is staff availability to provide oversight. The Department is requesting a new term contract position for a volunteer coordinator assistant for trails and streams. This position will recruit and coordinate volunteers to provide assistance to our staff in performing finishing work on natural surface trails and to do stream clean-ups. Adding this position will enable us to increase our capacity to engage volunteers and community partners in the field execution of projects.</p>	<p>Public Affairs and Community Partnerships</p>	<p>\$81,112</p>	<p>1.0 Term Position</p>

<p>The Resource Analysis unit is getting inundated with projects to review from external agencies and is struggling to keep up. There are currently only 3 Natural Resource staff to be project manager for large projects. In addition to these large road projects, there are more than 20 stream restoration projects currently in review, 30 SWM projects, the WSSC consent decree projects, plus other projects related to DEP and/or SHA's Phase I NPDES permit. Both DEP and DOT also have many new projects that are proposed to be on parkland which will further strain our resources. The current positions in the Resource Analysis unit who manage these projects have other major items on their work program. This request is to add a career position to provide resource analysis related to NPDES for the project review requests related to parkland that are received from external agencies.</p>	<p>Park Planning and Stewardship</p>	<p>\$100,583</p>	<p>1.0 FT Career Position</p>
<p>Efforts relating to sustaining existing nuisance wildlife programs required of the Department's NPDES MS4 permit (e.g. beaver, geese, deer, and groundhog) population management have continued to increase during the past 3 years as facilities, programs, and permit requirements have also grown. There were 39 facilities treated in FY16. Converting a term contract position to a career position will provide the on-going support and expertise needed for this critical program.</p>	<p>Park Planning and Stewardship</p>	<p>\$33,848</p>	<p>1.0 FT Career and remove 1.0 Term Position</p>

The increased funding request of \$586,223 for NPDES activities includes the costs for the items listed above. Note that if this request is approved, it will be offset by increased revenue from the Water Quality Fund. A breakdown of the funds is shown in the chart below.

New FY18 NPDES Funding Request	Personnel	Supplies and Materials	Other Services and Charges	Capital Outlay	Total
Stormwater/Bioretenion management positions	\$133,806	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$100,000	\$273,806
Mini excavator for stormwater management				\$60,000	\$60,000
Volunteer coordinator assistant	\$81,112				\$81,112
Principal Natural Resource Specialist – resource analysis	\$100,583				\$100,583
Natural resource specialist - wildlife management program	\$33,848				\$33,848
Stormwater contract and pond maintenance (annual contract escalation)			\$6,757		\$6,757
Personnel increases (Merit/COLA) for current staff funded through NPDES	\$30,117				\$30,117
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$379,466</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$26,757</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>	<b>\$586,223</b>

**NEW INITIATIVES FOR THE FY18 BUDGET**

In addition to the known commitments, the Department of Parks is proposing an increase for new initiatives that will enhance our current work program and help meet emerging needs.

The chart below gives a snapshot of the new initiatives followed by specific descriptions.

<b>Summary - New Initiatives</b>						
<b>Item &amp; Description</b>	<b>Career Positions</b>	<b>Term Positions</b>	<b>Career Wkyrs</b>	<b>Term Wkyrs</b>	<b>Seasonal Wkyrs</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Activating Urban Parks	-	-	-	-	3.0	\$125,000
Cultivating the Next Generation of Park Leaders and Workers	-	-	-	-	3.0	\$75,000
Enhancing and Expanding the Trail System	3.0	(1.0)	3.0	(1.0)	1.5	\$212,269
Improving Quality and Playability of Ballfields	4.0	-	4.0	-	-	\$625,463
Maximizing Operational Efficiency and Reliability	3.0	-	2.7	-	-	\$261,143
Meeting Legislative Mandates	1.0	-	1.2	-	-	\$105,741
Sub-Total	11.0	(1.0)	10.9	(1.0)	7.5	\$1,404,616
Water Quality Protection Fund	3.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	-	\$549,349
Total	14.0	0.0	13.9	0.0	7.5	\$1,953,965

<b><u>NEW INITIATIVE – ACTIVATING URBAN PARKS</u></b>	<b><u>3.0 Seasonal Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$125,000</u></b>
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**Activating Urban Parks - \$125,000 including 3.0 Seasonal Workyears**

As our Department continues to expand the number of program and event offerings in parks, this seasonal staffing is needed to support the program coordinator in developing and overseeing activities and programs that will increase the daily use of the County’s parks. Seasonal staff will facilitate the delivery of programs and events and will ensure patron safety for participants using the recently purchased mobile climbing wall and the portable pump track available for park events. Programs such as Tai Chi, seated massages, and Bollywood dancing events are currently being offered, but additional staffing and funding is required to continue expansion of this initiative. The funding request also includes \$50,000 for supplies needed for implementation of the events and programs.

<b><u>NEW INITIATIVE – CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PARK LEADERS AND WORKERS</u></b>	<b><u>3.0 Seasonal Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$75,000</u></b>
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**Cultivating the Next Generation of Park Leaders and Workers - \$75,000 including 3.0 Seasonal Workyears**

This initiative restores previously eliminated funding to the budget for a Departmental internship program. This program will be facilitated through the Management Services Division. Internships provide professional development training and regional networking opportunities for interns while increasing our ability to promote awareness of the County’s park system. Interns are a cost effective way to attract talented individuals to assist in completing special projects of short duration. The internship program will enhance and improve the work of the department, aid in recruitment of quality candidates for future employment, and provide meaningful workplace experiences for young adults.

<b><u>NEW INITIATIVE – ENHANCING AND EXPANDING THE TRAIL SYSTEM</u></b>	<b><u>3.0 Career Positions; (1.0) Term Position; 1.5 Seasonal Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$212,269</u></b>
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**Natural Resource Specialist - \$29,448 including converting 1 Term Contract position to 1 Full Time Career Position**

This position will help residents of the County find and enjoy new and current natural surface trails throughout the park system. In the information age, accuracy is essential. The residents of the County demand access to our natural areas, and natural surface trails provide that access. Using GIS data will aid in decision making when staff choose alignments that steward the environment while providing that access to nature. The GIS data managed by this position will allow residents to find trails that meet their individual needs. This position will be responsible for mapping of newly constructed or renovated trails and mapping of unsanctioned trails. This position will also update the trail layers in GIS as necessary and will update trails status on the Department’s web page. This work is currently funded as a term contract position. With the on-going demands for expansion and documenting of trails within the County, a career position is needed to meet Departmental demands. This request is to add a career position and eliminate the term position currently providing this support.

**Creation of a New Trails Crew - \$182,821 including 2 Full Time Career Positions and 1.5 Seasonal Workyears**

This crew will help develop new trail opportunities by converting unsanctioned trails within the County to sanctioned trails. Historically, the Department has a lower level of service for Natural Surface trails in the southern region of the County, and the addition of this crew will greatly increase our level of service in those areas. Currently, we are mapping some of these trails; however, adding this crew will enable us to increase our current inventory of natural surface trails. This crew will also re-route or enhance unsanctioned trails in order to upgrade the trails so that they comply with the Department’s sustainability guidelines. This funding request also includes \$10,000 for supplies. In addition, funding

for a vehicle and skid steer with trailer needed for this crew will be purchased through the Capital Equipment ISF.

<b><u>NEW INITIATIVE – IMPROVING QUALITY AND PLAYABILITY OF BALLFIELDS</u></b>	<b><u>4.0 Career Positions</u></b>	<b><u>\$625,463</u></b>
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**Ballfield Consistency Initiative – adding an Athletic Field Enhancement and Renovation Team - \$625,463 including 4 Full Time Career Positions**

The Department maintains nearly 300 ball fields on parkland. Turf and field conditions continue to deteriorate due to overuse and insufficient maintenance, increasing the risk of injury to patrons and substantially limiting the quality and playability of park fields. The industry standard maintenance practices for athletic field turf have significantly changed in the last few years. This has been the result of many studies that have shown a need for increased maintenance on heavily used athletic field turf. This maintenance includes aerification, seeding and higher nutrient needs. This crew will focus on providing safer, healthier turf in local park sites through site-specific and preventive maintenance and staff training. This team, under the direction of the Athletic Field Program Manager, will respond to and improve the identified deficiencies within our athletic field inventory by using specifically trained and highly skilled staff, combined with innovative turf management techniques. This team will also properly seed and fertilize these fields to promote optimum growth and plant health to resist wear and attack from diseases and weeds. This will create athletic fields with healthier turf that is safer and more playable for use by the public. Healthier turf has less need for pesticide use, so this will be an important step in eliminating pesticide use on our athletic fields. This funding request includes \$325,000 for supplies. In addition, funding for a vehicle, seeder, grader, aerators and other capital outlay needed for this team will be purchased through the Capital Equipment ISF.

<b><u>NEW INITIATIVE – MAXIMIZING OPERATIONAL EFFICENCY AND RELIABILITY</u></b>	<b><u>3.0 Career Positions; 2.7 Career Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$261,143</u></b>
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**Quality Assurance Officer – \$50,292 including 1 Full Time Career Position and 0.5 Workyear**

This position will improve the quality of CIP projects throughout the design and construction phases by ensuring a consistent level of quality that will help reduce errors and omissions that may result in project delays. Having a full-time Quality Assurance Officer will help our Department avoid construction problems, address constructability issues, minimize design errors, and control construction project costs which will ultimately save us time and money. This quality management will result in fewer project delays and cost overruns. This cost will be partially funded utilizing CIP funds, with 50% of the cost for this position to be paid out of the Park Fund and 50% of the cost to be paid through the CIP.

**Weed Warrior Program – \$17,045 including 1 Full Time Career Position converting from a Term Contract Position**

This program engages citizens in the management of non-native plant management and has continued to grow in participation, popularity and awareness. Currently, this program is managed by a term contract position. When this position was initially filled in FY14, there was an immediate growth by 59% in volunteers and participation. In the subsequent years, there was 39% growth in trained volunteers (829 to 1149 volunteers). The number of park areas treated also grew by 81% (48 to 87 Park units). Managing the growth and continued success of this program requires a full time career resource. This request is to add a career position and eliminate the term position currently providing supporting for this program.

**NNI/Meadows/Reforestation Management – \$193,806 including 2 Full Time Career Positions and 2.0 Workyears**

These positions (one position for Northern Parks Division and one position for the Southern Parks Division) will work on control of non-native invasive plants, meadow management, and reforestation area maintenance. These positions will monitor and oversee best practices used for natural areas, protection of natural resources, reduction of non-native seed bank formations, protection of native flora & fauna, and provide increased coverage for non-native plant eradication events. These positions will work with other Departmental staff to ensure that frequencies and standards are met and that contractors providing pesticide treatment within these natural areas comply with Departmental guidelines and with the use of mechanical means of control. This funding request also includes \$50,000 for supplies and \$10,000 for services. Vehicles for these positions will be purchased using funding from the Capital Equipment ISF.

<b><u>NEW INITIATIVE – MEETING LEGISLATIVE MANDATES</u></b>	<b><u>1.0 Career Positions; 1.2 Career Workyears</u></b>	<b><u>\$105,741</u></b>
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**ADA Assistant – \$24,412 including 1 Full Time Career Position and 0.3 Workyears**

This position will be part of the ADA Access Team and will assist in ensuring timely and effective implementation of the ADA transition plan. This position will assist in tracking and reviewing active ADA projects within the CIP or Major Maintenance program and will also track system updates including the addition of new amenities and removal of existing amenities using the Department’s Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system and supported by field observations. This cost will be partially funded with CIP funds, with 30% of the cost for this position to be paid out of the Park Fund and 70% of the cost to be paid through the CIP.

**Program Access Outreach Specialist – \$81,329 including 0.9 Workyears**

The Program Access Office coordinates inclusion services, training and outreach supporting the entire Department. Currently there are two full time career staff who manage a county-wide operation that supports a federal mandate. Since November 2015, the current Program Access Staff have trained over 785 employees in ADA and other educational trainings. This breaks down to 16 days and over 200 hours of training and prep time including research and development of curriculum. The staff has planned and

participated in events and community outreach including 15 events and over 62 hours of staff time. By hiring an employee to lead efforts in training, awareness programs and public outreach, the existing ADA staff can then shift their focus to enhancing efforts in ADA interpretation, policy and procedure development for the Department, fiscal responsibilities, program modifications, quality assurance and personnel management. Since the program access team is managed by the Enterprise Division, this position will be funded through the Enterprise Division with a chargeback to the Park Fund for that fund's portion of the cost.

### **Summary**

The Department of Parks is continuing to refine the FY18 Proposed Budget. Being mindful of the cost pressures facing the Park Fund from salaries, benefits, retirement, and mandated obligations, the FY18 budget request shows our commitment to continue to provide the best services possible to our customers with an 8.1% operating increase over the FY17 budget.

Staff is requesting approval from the Planning Board to proceed to prepare the FY18 Park Fund operating budget at the Base Budget plus New Initiatives level.

Staff will be available at the work session to provide any additional information on the budget request.

The Department of Parks is tentatively scheduled to return to the Planning Board on November 3 should a follow-up work session be required. The Department is scheduled for a final work session on the operating budget on November 17 to seek approval of specific funding levels for the FY18 Proposed Budgets for the Park Fund, Enterprise Fund, Property Management Fund, Special Revenue Fund, and Internal Services Equipment Fund.

APPENDIX A

**FY18 Operating Budget Impact (OBI) Project Descriptions**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Career WYs</b>	<b>Seasonal WYs</b>
<b>Brookside Gardens Greenhouse</b>	<b>\$75,705</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>
The Brookside Gardens Greenhouse and Plant Propagation Area in Wheaton, Maryland is a two-acre facility that will provide consolidated plant growing space for the gardens. Along with 10,000 square feet of outdoor growing space, the project will include a state-of-the-art 12,000 square foot production greenhouse featuring sustainable technologies such as high-efficiency mechanical systems and rainwater harvesting irrigation. It is the Department's first design-build project. Estimated opening: Spring FY17.			
<b>Western Grove Urban Park</b>	<b>\$26,261</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.3</b>
Western Grove Urban Park is a two-acre site that provides a significant opportunity to create green open space for the use and enjoyment of urban residents in one of the most densely-populated Metro Station areas in Montgomery County. The site is adjacent to the Friendship Heights CBD and is within the limits of Chevy Chase Village. Now vacant, the site was formerly a single-family home, located at 5409 Grove Street, Chevy Chase. Estimated opening: Second half of FY17. Partial year funding was included in the FY17 budget with the remaining funding deferred until FY18.			
<b>Laytonia Recreational Park</b>	<b>\$2,974</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>
Laytonia Recreational Park is located at the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Muncaster Mill Road and Airpark in the Derwood area of Rockville. Access to this new park will be from Airpark Road. The park consists of three parcels totaling nearly 51 acres: an undeveloped surplus school site, a parcel dedicated through the subdivision process, and adjacent church property purchased by the M-NCPPC. The new County Animal Shelter is located on a seven-acre portion of the property. The approved plan includes: one full-size lit, irrigated baseball field; one lit and irrigated synthetic turf field; two lit, irrigated rectangular turf fields; 240 parking spaces with the potential for 50 additional spaces in the future, if needed; playground, basketball court, combination restroom picnic shelter, trails and a maintenance building. Estimated opening: Second half of FY17. Partial year funding was included in the FY17 budget with the remaining funding deferred until FY18.			
<b>TOTAL OBI FOR CIP PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$104,940</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Poplar Run Trail</b>	<b>\$4,601</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>
The Poplar Run community is located in Silver Spring near the ICC and Route 29. Developer built trails within the community include a hard surface trail as well as natural surface trails with a bridge across the Northwest Branch linking the community to existing Parks trails.			
<b>TOTAL OBI FOR NON-CIP PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$4,601</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$109,541</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.9</b>