



# THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Department of Parks, Montgomery County, Maryland  
9500 Brunett Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

MCPB 7/7/05

Item No. 10

June 30, 2005

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Lester L. Straw, Superintendent of Parks *LLS*  
Michael F. Riley, Chief, Park Development Division *MR*  
Doug Alexander, Project Management Section Supervisor *DA*

**FROM:** Ellen Masciocchi, Project Manager *EM*

**SUBJECT:** Facility Plan for Renovation of Takoma Piney Branch Local Park

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Approve the Facility Plan for Takoma Piney Branch Local Park, including cost estimate.
- Approve the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan.
- Determine the schedule for design and construction during review of the FY07-12 Capital Improvements Program.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Introduction

The purpose of this project is to design a facility plan to renovate Takoma Piney Branch Local Park. The park, located within the City limits of Takoma Park, is 17.4 acres and surrounded by three schools, the City government building, police

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARKS

department and library, as well as single-family homes, and apartment buildings. The two apartment buildings are the Deauville and Park Ritchie apartments.

Takoma Piney Branch Local Park was built in the 1970's. The site gains access from Grant Avenue to the south and Darwin Avenue to the west. See Attachment A – Vicinity Map. Three Montgomery County public schools surround the park. They are Piney Branch Elementary School, serving grades 3-5, Takoma Park Elementary School, serving grades K-2, and Takoma Park Middle School, serving grades 6-8.

The park provides the only green space in a densely populated area. It includes a softball field with a multi-purpose field overlay known as Ed Wilhelm field, a playground, a picnic shelter with attached restrooms, a parking lot, two tennis courts, two basketball courts, a grassed volleyball area, and a paved play area. The park playground, fields and paved play area provide the only recreational opportunities for Piney Branch Elementary School. The ballfields are permitted and maintained by the City of Takoma Park and feature an underground irrigation system. The Commission permits the picnic shelter.

A wooded area is located along the eastern edge of the park. It includes natural surface trails, an outdoor education area and a stream valley. The community refers to it as "Takoma Woods".

### **Project Funding**

Facility planning represents thirty percent complete construction documents, and results in a proposed design, cost estimate, and determination of regulatory feasibility. The cost of the facility plan was \$60,000 funded through the Facility Planning – Local Parks budget within the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Staff is presenting the facility plan to the Montgomery County Planning Board for potential placement in the FY2007-2012 CIP.

### **Facility Planning Process**

The goal of the park facility plan is to renovate and refurbish a 30-year-old park. Frederick Ward Associates was hired as the Consultant in June 2004 to develop the plan. The facility planning process included the following steps:

1. Preparation of site survey and geotechnical investigations.
2. Analysis of existing site conditions, which included several site visits with environmental staff.
3. Preparation and approval in January 2005 of a Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation.
4. Meetings with Piney Branch Elementary School and the City.
5. Meetings with the Park and Planning staff team and Consultant including: (See Attachment B – Chronology of meetings)
  - Kick off the project

- Presentation of two alternatives
  - Review of 75% drawings
  - Review of 100% drawings
6. A meeting on January 26, 2005, with the community to present the two alternatives.
  7. Notifications sent to adjacent homeowners and civic associations to show the preferred alternative, program of requirements, and a second mailing to provide them with the date of the Planning Board meeting.
  8. Approval of stormwater management concept plan and Forest Conservation Plan.
  9. Final Plan Review held on June 20, 2005.

## **PLANNING DOCUMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Management and Renovation Plan**

In 1999, at the request of area residents, a joint management plan was developed for the park. A series of workshops were held, which included Park staff, City staff, and Takoma Park residents. To assist in implementation of the plan, the City obtained a \$36,800 block grant in 2001 to fund restoration efforts for a part of Takoma Woods. The grant provided funds to clear and repair the trail, replant native species, build a rustic outdoor classroom, construct a rain garden, install bleachers, and upgrade the volleyball court. Volunteers, the Montgomery County Conservation Corps, and the Potomac Appalachian Club under the supervision of the Park staff completed the work.

A Management and Renovation Plan was ultimately developed and approved by the City of Takoma Park, and by the Montgomery County Planning Board in March 2002. It included recommendations for management and improvements that would restore “woodland” area of the park and renovate active recreation areas. It also included recommendations for immediate and long-term improvements to the park. These improvements were funded by a series of grants written by the City, Park staff, and citizen volunteers. The grants included the Community Development Block Grant mentioned previously. The report further highlights the need for a playground to replace the old parcourse (exercise station) located near the Piney Branch Elementary School.

### **Takoma Master Plan**

Support for the renovation of the Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park may be found in the East Silver Spring Master Plan, Approved and Adopted December 2000. Renovation and maintenance of existing facilities is a recommendation of the plan found in the Community Facilities, Parks and Environmental Resources Theme. The plan recognizes that since the area is substantially developed, there are limited opportunities to provide additional services and facilities. Consequently, creative policy, management and design solutions must be pursued as opportunities present themselves.

The recommended Facility Plan conforms to the Master Plan Recommendation.

### **Skateboard Park Proposal**

In 2001, staff presented the Board with a proposal for converting the tennis courts in the park to a skateboard park. The City of Takoma Park made this request in response to community advocacy for a skateboard park. They expressed a willingness to operate a skateboard park on park property if they were able to secure a state grant to supply the equipment. This arrangement required a Board action to grant the City permission to operate the skateboard park on park property. The Planning Board approved this use on March 14, 2002, however, subsequently, funds were not available for the equipment through the state grant program. See Attachment C – Planning Board Packet for Skateboard Park.

### **Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS Plan)**

The facility plan is consistent with the 1998 PROS plan. The 2005 Staff draft Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) cites the need for fifteen skateboard parks in the County. As mentioned above, Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park has Planning Board, City and community approval for a small-scale, modular, neighborhood skateboard park. Staff continues to recommend the park as an acceptable location for this recreational use. The Planning Board approval previously supported the provision and operation of the facility by the City.

The facility plan advocates the construction of an initial phase of the skateboard park, which reconfigures the paved area and fences it. This part of the project will not be implemented unless an entity to complete and operate the skateboard park is identified as well as a funding source to complete it.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM OF REQUIREMENTS (POR)**

### **Interest Group and Agency Input During Programming Phase**

Two preliminary meetings were held on site with Park staff to discuss the POR before the project began. Two meetings were also held with the Park Manager to discuss suggested park improvements, one in April 2002 and a second meeting in October 2003. The final POR was developed based on input received from the community, advisory groups, Takoma Park City government, and the M-NCPPC staff team.

The kick-off meeting was held on June 1, 2004. The following staff units were represented at the meeting and on the team that met throughout the duration of the plan.

Park Development

Community-based Planning  
Countywide Planning  
Environmental Planning  
Southern Region  
Natural Resources  
Park Police  
City of Takoma Park

In addition to the regular team meetings, two separate meetings were held to discuss both playgrounds in the park and the removal of invasive plants.

### **Piney Branch Elementary School Input**

Several meetings were held with the staff of Piney Branch Elementary School to solicit their input for the facility plan. The park provides the only recreational space for the school. School property consists of the parking lot and the building. The asphalt play area, ballfields, playground, and basketball court closest to the school provide the play areas utilized by the school.

An initial meeting was held in February 2004 with Lee Meiners, the principal of the school to explain the renovation and solicit his input on both the proposed and existing play areas. He commented that the basketball court was the most heavily used recreational facility, followed by the parcourse and asphalt play area. A subsequent meeting was held in August 2004 at the school with the facility plan team composed of Park and Planning staff as well as the City Planner to discuss the proposed facility plan and its impact on the school.

In September 2004 a team meeting was held on site to discuss the existing and proposed playgrounds for the park. An additional meeting was held with the Principal in Training in October 2004. A representative from the City's Department of Recreation was also in attendance.

### **Program of Requirements**

- **Improvements to Takoma Woods** - Further efforts, in addition to those funded by the block grant include timber steps where needed, minor grading to stabilize the slope, wood plank boardwalk in wet areas, and improved pedestrian access to the park through The Woods.
- **Removal of Invasive Plants** - The community has a strong desire to remove invasive plants in the park that are hampering the growth of natural plants and trees. The Friends of Sligo are interested in assisting in this effort. Removal of invasive plants in Takoma Woods would have to be the result of a volunteer effort. The invasive plants on the slope leading down from the parking lot would need to be removed at the time of park reconstruction. New native plant material should be installed and the slope should be heavily mulched. A maintenance program will need to be instituted to sustain these efforts.

- **Stormwater Management Improvements** - The park has substantial drainage problems that are addressed through stormwater management practices including the addition of a stormwater management pond, bioretention pond, creation of swales, and additional piping.
- **Replacement of Tennis Courts with a Skateboard Park** – Since 2001, the community has consistently endorsed the idea of replacing the tennis courts with a skateboard park.
- **Improvements to Grant Avenue Entrance** - Currently, there are two entrance paths from Grant Avenue to the park, one is a maintenance road and the other is an inaccessible entrance path.

A community center for the City of Takoma Park is under construction adjacent to the park at the foot of Grant Avenue. The second phase of the project is the design and construction of a gym as well as associated parking. Funding is not available now for this phase of the project. The construction of the gym and parking will require that a portion of the park is deeded to the City. Arrangements for the dedication of park property are on hold pending future design and construction of the gym.

The City agreed to design and construct a new accessible park entrance as part of the original land exchange agreement when both phases of the project were to be constructed at the same time. This was part of a mandatory referral that went before the Board in July of 2002. See Attachment D – Planning Board resolution on Takoma Park Community Center. Staff has proceeded with a modified design for the accessible entrance and included it in the facility plan cost estimate, since the part of the City project impacting park property is on hold.

A new maintenance road will be constructed that will include the addition of a swinging gate near Grant Avenue to prevent cars from driving into the park. Landscaping will be added to enhance deterrence of this type of activity. Handicap parking will be provided at this entrance as well.

- **Construction of a New Playground Adjacent to the School and Replacement of the Existing Playground** - The replacement of the existing playground will allow for separation of age groups. It will be shifted away from the trees to minimize the impact of the new underground drain system. The construction of the new playground adjacent to the school will attempt to meet school recreational needs.
- **Replacement of Two Volleyball Courts with One** - The two existing volleyball courts will be replaced with one court that is reoriented to improve drainage. This change is a result of input from the community and the City Department of Recreation.

- **Provision of a Loop Path** - City staff as well as members of the community endorse the addition of this feature. Loop paths have proven to be a popular feature for local parks. The path will have Heart Smart markers.
- **Construction of a New Shelter without Restrooms** - The community was aware that the existing restrooms attached to the shelter are in poor condition and cannot be left unlocked. They pose a security problem for Park Police who are unable to see into the shelter because the attached restrooms block their view from the parking lot. Staff determined that the location of portatoilets closer to the playground and ballfields would be an acceptable substitute. A smaller shelter will be constructed on the pad of the existing shelter.
- **Construction of Two New Basketball Courts in Approximately the Same Location** - Both the Principal of Piney Branch Elementary School and Director of the City Department of Recreation mentioned the basketball courts were well used. Neither basketball court is sized to allow full court play, which is acceptable to the community, Department of Recreation, and Piney Branch Elementary School. The current locations of both courts work well. They will be renovated to include a coating of asphalt, repainting and restriping. Two benches will be added as well as replacement rims, backboard and poles. The footings for the poles will be reinstalled.
- **Maintain Ballfields in Current Location** - The City permits and maintains the ballfields known as Ed Wilhelm field. The fields are in good condition and they are well maintained by the City. An underground watering system is used to keep the fields irrigated. Controls for the system will now be located in a shed behind the backstop adjacent to the volleyball courts. No improvements will be made to the fields during the renovation process. The existing backstop adjacent to the school will be moved to allow for youth baseball in the future.
- **Construct a New Asphalt Play Area in Same Location as Current One with Minor Adjustments** - One of the goals of the renovation was to reduce impervious surface in the park where possible. It was determined that the current asphalt play area exceeds the amount of space necessary for playing games. Under the renovation plan, a part of the asphalt play area will be removed, which is acceptable to the school and the community. The remaining paved play area will be widened to efficiently layout four-square, tetherball, hopscotch, or other games as desired. Benches will be added at the entrance from the school.
- **Improvement of the Entrance at Darwin Avenue to Include Security Lighting and New Stairs from the Parking Lot** - The existing parking lot is isolated and is not signed as a park entrance. The Park Police Community Relations Officer approached the adjacent homeowners about the possibility of

lighting the parking lot. They responded positively to this proposal. A new house is being constructed close to the park whose owner has not been contacted at this time. The residents of Grant Avenue support any improvements to the park that would make the Darwin Avenue entrance more attractive to park visitors. A plaza, and bike rack as well as signage with the park name were added to the plan to make it clear that this is a park entrance.

- **Improvements to Natural Surface Trails with New Pedestrian Entrances** - Many school children traverse the park on their way to school. As a result, both City staff and local residents are concerned about pedestrian access to the park from adjacent apartments. An entrance from the Deauville apartments will be maintained. There was a request to provide access on a narrow path between the Deauville apartments and Piney Branch Elementary School. This does not appear to be workable since the slope leading from the path up to the park is heavily eroded. Encouragement of pedestrian access at this location will serve to further erode this area.
- **Relocation of Water Fountain** - A water fountain is located in the park shelter. It will be removed and the new water fountain will be relocated.
- **Additional Signage** - Signage will be added to clarify the use of the Darwin Avenue entrance for vehicular traffic and to clearly demarcate it as a park entrance. Signage to indicate Takoma Woods will be added.

## FACILITY PLAN

### Existing Conditions

The park is forested on approximately one fifth of the site. The presence of invasive plants throughout the park is a major concern. They include Bamboo, Kudzu, English Ivy, and Spanish Tear Thumb. The invasive vegetation impacts the existing trees as well as many of the dead trees. They are overgrowing the under story and crowding out the native species. Invasive plants have overgrown a number of dead trees in the park, causing the tree canopy to be opened up.

A Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation was prepared, which identified fifty nine specimen trees within the project area. The most important specimens are located along the slope between the northern playground and the athletic fields. The playground currently at that location will be shifted back from the trees to prevent the new underground drain system associated with the playground from impacting the tree roots when the park renovation takes place.

There are notable differences in elevation in this park. The grade transition in the park is divided into three level areas plus the stream valley. The parking lot at Darwin Avenue slopes down seventeen feet to the level where the picnic shelter and play area are located.



There is a thirteen-foot drop in elevation down to the athletic fields, tennis courts, and basketball courts. This dramatic change in elevation makes it impossible to locate the main entrance to the park at the Darwin Avenue parking lot and still maintain handicap access.

Takoma Woods houses the only stream channel in the park. It flows from north to south. The Consultant met at the site with the Army Corps of Engineers to determine what areas could be designated as Non-Tidal Wetlands. The Corps staff determined that the stream condition does not meet the requirements of a wetland and the Corps did not take jurisdiction over the stream channel.

There are a number of areas of erosion within the park. They include the path owned by M-NCPPC between the Deauville apartments and Piney Branch Elementary School, several areas within The Woods to the east resulting from uncontrolled runoff, and along the steps from the parking lot at Darwin Avenue to the picnic area. All of these areas receive high use or have steep slopes that are subject to uncontrolled runoff from the park.

The existing park was constructed prior to the development of SWM requirements. The combination of impervious areas and steep slopes has caused several areas of erosion around the park. The SWM design for the renovation attempts to retrofit SWM Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the park to treat both existing and proposed impervious areas to the extent feasible. The proposed BMPs include a shallow wetland marsh, a bioretention filter, and several water quality swales that will improve drainage, reduce erosion, and improve water quality throughout the park.

### **Center for Watershed Protection**

In response to interest expressed by the local community regarding the conditions of the undeveloped area of the park known as Takoma Woods, the Commission contracted with the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) to study various environmental enhancement alternatives that could be associated with this project. This public request was handled separately from the facility plan. They include creating off-site stormwater improvements or wetlands on MCPS property, daylighting the base flow of the piped channel within the valley, creating a wetland on park property within the wooded area, and retrofitting stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP's) within the active park area. The Consultant as part of the facility plan presented an additional option of removing invasive species and reforesting a portion of The Woods.

Based on conversations with the City, staff determined that implementing any of the proposed alternatives would require significant coordination between various stakeholders including the City, Park Manager, Natural Resources Division, Takoma Middle School, and the local residents for installation and long-term operation and maintenance. Therefore, a group of these stakeholders will be formed to determine which would be the most cost effective and useful alternative to include with this project.

The most appropriate option would be to create on-site constructed wetlands. Staff recommends including the cost for this option in the facility plan.

## **Alternative Plans Considered**

### **Elements Common to Both Alternatives A and B**

There are a number of elements that are common to both alternatives. Additions include provision of a loop path, enhancement of natural surface trail and pedestrian connections, installation of a gate and handicap parking at Grant Avenue. Signage will be provided at both park entrances, as well as security lighting in the parking lot. New storm water management improvements will be installed to minimize erosion and improve stream conditions. The existing shelter/restrooms will be removed. A new, smaller shelter will be constructed and portatoilets will replace existing restrooms. Invasive plants will be removed in priority areas and the existing trees near the playground will be limbed up. The soccer field, baseball field, basketball and volleyball courts will remain on or near their current locations.

The following outlines the differences between the two alternatives.

### **Alternative A**

Alternative A assumes that improvements such as the relocation of the cul-de-sac and pedestrian path from Grant Avenue associated with the Community Center will be installed per plans produced by the City of Takoma Park.

The entrance from Grant Avenue is integrated with improvements to the Community Center. This alternate includes a serpentine path up the slope from a new turnaround at the end of Grant Avenue. The maintenance path and the access path cross in several places. The transition up the slope from Grant is smooth and does not require retaining walls and the sign at Grant Avenue is closer to the road.

This plan places the playground between the basketball court near the school and the asphalt play area. The existing playground moves back to the vicinity of the existing shelter and the shelter is moved to the open area at the bottom of the stairs leading down from the Darwin Avenue parking lot.

The portable restroom is located closer to the homes on Grant Avenue and a full size basketball court is created closer to the playground area. One tennis court is preserved and the other is converted to a roller hockey rink.

The stormwater management area at the end of the existing tennis courts is smaller. The backstop closest to the school can be moved to accommodate another field if necessary.

## **Alternative B**

Alternative B considers the development separate from the Community Center improvements and makes an attempt to renovate the park at a lower cost. This plan requires minimal additional paving, relocation of facilities or change of uses.

The existing playground is maintained in the same location beneath the trees and near the playfields. The location of the playground near the school is in a high visibility area. Full-size regulation basketball courts are created in both locations and the existing basketball court is moved closer to the school. The backstop near the school stays in the same location and does not provide for a future regulation field. A rollerblade court is created instead of a skateboard park on one of the tennis courts.

The stormwater management area adjacent to the existing tennis courts is larger. The signage for the Grant Avenue entrance is up the slope and away from the road and off-street handicapped parking is provided.

## **Preferred Alternative (See Attachment E – Preferred Alternative)**

The preferred alternative combines favored features from both alternatives and makes no changes to the ballfields, basketball courts, and existing playground. It adds a playground near the school in place of the parcourse, converts both tennis courts to a skateboard park, reduces the two volleyball courts to one and reorients it, creates a larger pond for stormwater management, places the portatoilets at the farthest point from residential homes, adds handicap parking at Grant Avenue, landscapes both entrances, and provides a loop path around the park.

Pedestrian access is enhanced and comprehensive stormwater management practices are put into place. Invasive plants are removed and a management plan is established to discourage further growth. New native plants are installed.

The preferred alternative was sent to citizens in March 2005. The mailing included the program of requirements as well as a rendered facility plan that represented a blend of the two alternatives presented at the community meeting held on January 26, 2005. Residents called or e-mailed their comments on the plan. The preferred plan was presented to the City Council on March 7, 2005.

After discussion with the residents of Grant Avenue in May, a plaza, sign, and bike rack were added at the Darwin Avenue parking lot to feature it more as a major park entrance. The Grant Avenue entrance was redesigned to reduce its attractiveness as an entrance to the park, distant from the parking at Darwin Avenue.

## **Natural Resources**

Extensive efforts have been made to preserve the natural resources within the park. The community has expressed their appreciation for M-NCPPC staff efforts on behalf of the environmental concerns at several meetings. A member of the Sierra Club praised staff efforts at the Takoma Park City Council meeting. Preservation measures include:

- Removal of unnecessary asphalt in the play area and parking lot
- Use of grasscrete pavers where it is practical to limit the amount of asphalt surface in the park
- Removal and management of invasive plants
- Stormwater management efforts that surpass the required retrofits
- Improvements to the trails within Takoma Woods
- Installation of a wetland
- The existing playground is shifted away from the trees to ensure they are not impacted by the drains that will be installed for the new playground
- Reuse of the existing concrete shelter pad for the new shelter

A preliminary Forest Conservation Plan was prepared and submitted to Environmental Planning staff. Adjustments were made to the plan in response to comments from the project team and Environmental Planning staff recommendations. A memorandum recommending approval of the plan with conditions is attached. See Attachment F – Memorandum on Forest Conservation Plan.

### **Permit Issues**

Since the park is within the city limits of Takoma Park, they would have to approve the stormwater management permit. The sediment and erosion control, grading, construction, tree protection, and building permits (for the shelter) will need to be approved by the County Department of Permitting Services at the time of design. In May 2005, the City Engineer approved the stormwater management concept plan for the facility plan.

### **Public Arts Trust**

A presentation was made to the Public Arts Trust requesting funding for artwork for the park. Staff is aware of the Trust's desire to provide art in the Downcounty area in the interest of maintaining equity in the program. This park is of particular interest because of its location as well as its proximity to three schools, two elementary and one middle school. A presentation was made to the Trust on March 8, 2005. The Consultant provided a powerpoint presentation and sketches of possible ideas for artwork, which included an entrance feature, a design on the asphalt play area, and a feature around a tree at the entrance to the park. The Public Arts Trust is willing to pay for design of artwork; however, it does not have sufficient funds for the fabrication or construction. Staff has included \$50,000 in the facility plan cost estimate for the construction of designed artwork.

## **Community Outreach**

Park staff worked closely with the City planning and recreation staff since the inception of the project. City staff has guided Park staff by providing names of citizens to be contacted during the facility planning process, providing interface with City Council members, providing updates on the plans for the community center, and facilitating meetings with community members.

A community meeting was held January 26, 2005 where the two alternatives for the facility plan of the park were presented. Attendance was low. The original meeting date was canceled due to snow. A powerpoint presentation that showed drawings of both alternatives was made. The Consultant described each of the alternatives in depth and then opened up a discussion from the citizens. The Mayor of Takoma Park was in attendance. The residents did not prefer one alternative to another, but instead preferred a blend of the two plans. The preferred alternative was developed based on comments from City Council members, community members, and M-NCPPC staff.

The preferred plan was presented to the City Council on March 7, 2005. After the City Council meeting, the preferred alternative was posted on the City's website and a mailing was sent to citizens on the streets surrounding the park requesting their feedback by April 1, 2005. The mailing included a map of the preferred alternative, the program of requirements, contact information as well as a deadline date for feedback on the plan. A number of citizens provided their comments via e-mail. See Attachment G - Community Correspondence.

The residents of Grant Avenue continued to express concerns about the plan, particularly where it impacted their street. A request was made to have staff look at the possibility of moving the main park entrance to Darwin Avenue where the parking lot is located. The amount of paving at Grant Avenue was an additional concern since the plan showed paving for a maintenance road, handicap access and a set of stairs at that entrance.

Staff met with the Grant Avenue residents twice on May 23 and 27, 2005, in response to these concerns. Councilmember Joy Austin-Lane attended the first meeting. The City Planner attended both meetings. Staff heard citizen complaints at the first meeting and responded back on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Staff explained the difficulty in providing handicap access at the Darwin Avenue entrance resulting from the steep drop in elevation from the parking lot. An entrance at that location would require 325 linear feet of ramp, retaining walls, and it could double the amount of impervious surface in the park. Park staff agreed to eliminate the stairs at the Grant Avenue entrance, widen and relocate the stairs at Darwin Avenue and add a bike rack, plaza, and signage to create a more welcoming park entrance from the parking lot. An additional concern was the need to prevent people from driving into the park from the Grant Avenue entrance. This is a current problem. Staff proposed a gate that would be placed closer to the road at the entrance to the maintenance road to prevent car

traffic from entering the park. Landscaping will be placed around the pedestrian path to prevent car traffic as well. The City accepted this recommendation.

On Monday, June 06, 2005, Park staff joined City staff for a presentation to the City Council. The purpose was to provide the City Council information on the adjustments made to the plan and to ask for a resolution to support the project. The Council heard testimony from citizens in support of the project. The Council expressed their support for the project as well. One Councilmember expressed her desire to have the development of the skateboard park accelerated.

The Council voted on a resolution on June 20, 2005, formalizing support for the project. See Attachment H – City Resolution. One of the residents from Grant Avenue testified on behalf of the project at the City Council meeting. Two City Council members testified on behalf of the project at the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) public hearing held on April 7, 2005.

The community received postcard notification of the Planning Board meeting to review the facility plan.

## **COSTS**

### **Design and Construction**

The Consultant prepared a cost estimate for the design and construction of the renovations to Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park. The CIP request will be for design in the first year and construction in the second year. The cost for design and construction of the park is \$3,329,293. A summary of the estimated cost to complete the improvements is listed in the following Table. See attached Consultant's Facility Plan Report for the detailed cost estimate (Attachment I).

**Takoma-Piney Branch Facility Plan Cost Estimate**  
June 30, 2005

ITEM NO.	ITEM	TOTAL COST
1	EARTHWORK	\$117,500.00
2	LANDSCAPING	\$139,507.00
3	PEDESTRIAN PAVEMENT & HARDSCAPE	\$646,500.00
4	RECREATION FACILITIES - P&A Gravel Area	\$366,000.00
5	SITE AMENITIES & FURNISHINGS	\$88,500.00
6	SITE PREPARATION & DEMOLITION	\$94,050.00
7	STORMWATER MANAGEMENT/STORM DRAINAGE	\$281,225.00
8	STRUCTURES	\$59,900.00
9	UTILITIES	\$33,750.00
10	VEHICULAR PAVEMENT	\$55,750.00
11	AS-BUILT DRAWINGS (for SWM, underground utilities, bridge footings)	\$15,000.00
	<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,897,682.00</b>
	Sediment & Erosion Control (6% of Construction)	\$113,860.92
	<b>CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY</b>	<b>\$569,304.60</b>
	(30% of Construction Subtotal)	
	<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,580,847.52</b>
	DESIGN CONTRACT WITH CONTINGENCY	\$516,169.50
	(20% of Construction Total)	
	STAFF CHARGEBACKS FOR DESIGN	\$103,233.90
	(20% of Design Contract with Contingency)	
	CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT & INSPECTIONS	\$129,042.38
	(5% of Construction Total)	
	<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$3,329,293.30</b>

## Operating Budget

Staff prepared the Operating Budget Impact (OBI) figures for this project. Since this park is a renovation, the OBI reflects the additional cost for the features added with this plan. The table below reflects the broad categories for those costs.

### Operating Budget Impact Chart

ITEM NO.	TASK	TOTAL COST
A	TURF CARE - EXISTING	
	SUBTOTAL	\$0.00
B	TREES, SHRUBS, AND INVASIVES	
	SUBTOTAL	\$5,023.50
C	WETLAND / WOODS	
	SUBTOTAL	\$1,000.00
D	PAVING, STAIRS & BOARDWALKS	
	SUBTOTAL	\$850.00
E	SITE AMENITIES	
	SUBTOTAL	\$5,630.00
F	STORMWATER MANAGEMENT POND	
	SUBTOTAL	\$405.00
G	GENERAL TASKS - EXISTING	
	SUBTOTAL	\$0.00
H	POLICE PATROLS - EXISTING	
	SUBTOTAL	\$0.00
	ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET SUBTOTAL	\$12,908.50
	CONTINGENCY	\$1,290.85
	TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET COST	\$14,199.35
	First Year Only Costs	\$305.00
	Second Year Only Costs	\$990.00

## ATTACHMENTS

- A - Vicinity Map
- B - Chronology of meetings
- C - Planning Board packet for Skateboard park
- D - Planning Board Resolution on Takoma Park Community Center
- E - Preferred Alternative
- F - Memorandum on Forest Conservation Plan



G -Community Correspondence  
H -City Resolution  
I - Facility Plan Technical Report