

M-NCPPC



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**FROM:** John A. Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division (301.495.4575) *JAC*  
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**SUBJECT:** Comments on the FY07-12 CIP  
Montgomery County Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

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The purpose of this report is to provide comments to the County Council and County Executive on the FY07-12 Capital Improvements Program recommended by the County Executive in January 2006. The comments do not address park projects including the Legacy Open Space Program since they are addressed in the Park CIP.

During each CIP cycle, the M-NCPPC identifies priority projects for addition to the Montgomery County Capital Improvements Program. The Planning Board recommended priority projects on July 25, 2005 prior to the completion of the recommendations of the County Executive. These comments were transmitted to the County Executive for use in the preparation of the recommended FY07-12 CIP. This year, a majority of the priorities identified by the Planning Board were included in the recommended CIP prepared by the County Executive. The County Executive has done a thorough job in responding to all of the comments of the Planning Board regarding the FY07-12 CIP. This CIP contains a chapter that reviews each recommendation of the Planning Board (see Attachment 1).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

After review of the County Executive's Recommended Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Fiscal Years 07-12, the staff recommends that the following comments be transmitted to the County Executive and County Council. This staff report includes the following three sections:

- Recommendations for Countywide Priorities
- Recommendations for Specific Priorities by Geographic Team of the Community-Based Planning Division
- Transportation Priorities (Attachment 1)

The transportation recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, and transportation priorities are enclosed in Attachment 1 of this report to be transmitted directly to the Department of Public Works and Transportation.

Each section includes the original recommendation of the Planning Board prepared on July 25, 2005, and the response by the County Executive in the January 2006 CIP with additional comments from the staff of the M-NCPPC.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNTYWIDE PRIORITIES

The following paragraphs summarize the countywide priorities recommended by the Planning Board. These priorities include general topics that apply to several geographic areas. The priorities identified in this set of recommendations emphasize community center projects, housing initiatives, pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, and transportation facilities.

### Community Center Projects

**Planning Board Recommendation** – Improvement of several community centers to serve the recreation needs of our existing communities should receive high priority. A general fund is needed for facility planning for community centers. This fund would be used to recommend sites, establish joint development options, identify costs, and set priorities for the next series of community centers to be funded in Montgomery County. Priority projects include the following:

- Brookmont Elementary School - This former school site should be incorporated into Sangamore Local Park if the existing lease is not renewed
- Friendship Heights Community Center - Operational funds and limited CIP funds are needed
- North Bethesda Community Center - Facility planning and construction funds are needed
- North Potomac Community Center - Facility planning and construction funds are needed
- Scotland Neighborhood Community Center - Facility planning and construction funds for the renovation or replacement of this facility are needed
- Wheaton Community Center - Facility planning, site assessment and construction funds are needed.

**Response** – All of these projects were included in the CIP. The Friendship Heights Community Center is under construction by the private sector. Operating funds should be included for this project. The site for the North Bethesda Community Center will be dedicated as part of the Rock Spring development project. Additional private construction funds will also be available for this project.

## **Housing Initiatives**

**Planning Board Recommendation** – CIP funds are needed to provide joint development opportunities for affordable housing projects in Montgomery County. Joint development of selected sites owned at least partially by Montgomery County should receive high priority. Potential joint development sites that will require funds for facility planning to initiate affordable housing projects include the following:

- Maintenance Facilities at the Shady Grove Metro Station - DPWT and MCPS
- Parking Lot 31 in the Bethesda CBD - DPWT
- Silver Spring Transit Center - DPWT, MTA and WMATA

The WMATA owns the following sites that will be available for joint development including affordable housing. These sites will not require specific funds from the CIP. They will require staff time from County agencies to implement joint development.

- Glenmont Metro Station - WMATA
- Twinbrook Metro Station - WMATA
- Shady Grove Metro Station - WMATA and Montgomery County
- Wheaton Metro Station - WMATA

Providing opportunities for affordable housing in each of these planning areas through joint development of public land will be a significant recommendation in each of these plans.

**Response** – All of these projects were included in the CIP. The Shady Grove Sector Plan was recently approved, and the County Council has requested that all agencies produce a coordinated Framework for Action Report in 2006 that will identify the actions necessary to implement this plan. Relocation of the County Service Park should be included in the actions needed to implement the Shady Grove Sector Plan. Public sites such as the Gude Landfill should be considered for the location of portions of the County Service Park. This project will be coordinated with the Shady Grove Sectional Map Amendment. The programming and design for Parking Lot 31 in the Bethesda CBD and the Silver Spring Transit Center are already underway.

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements**

**Planning Board Recommendation** – Pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns continue to be emphasized in the work program of the Department of Park and Planning. The CIP should place special emphasis on pedestrian safety including augmenting the sidewalk program and improving the design of intersections.

**Response** – The list of priorities is located in the Transportation Attachment 1.

## **Transportation Demand Management**

**Planning Board Recommendation** – A general fund for Transportation Demand Management continues to be needed to address traffic concerns in the major employment centers. Funds for transportation management are included in the operating budget. Transportation Demand Management is mentioned because it should be coordinated with the funds for roads and transit facilities, and the pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements that are included in the CIP. Providing an option to the single occupant vehicle is the primary goal of Transportation Demand Management.

**Response** – The operating budget includes funds for Transportation Demand Management.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC PRIORITIES BY GEOGRAPHIC TEAM OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING DIVISION**

The following paragraphs summarize more specific priorities for each geographic area. Transportation projects including roads, transit and bikeways, and pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements are included in the transportation recommendations.

### **Silver Spring/Takoma Park Area**

#### **Planning Board Recommendations:**

- **Downtown Silver Spring Ice Rink and Pavilion** - This project would fund the public facility at Veterans Plaza that was deleted from the last CIP due to cost concerns.
- **Silver Spring Transit Center** - This project would provide funds for the Silver Spring Transit Center to construct an extension of Ramsey Avenue/Bonifant Street to Ripley Street within the boundaries of the property owned by Montgomery County and WMATA. Private development is required to dedicate and construct streets shown in an approved and adopted master plan. These funds would allow the public sector to meet the obligation to dedicate and construct this connection as indicated in the Sector Plan for the Silver Spring CBD. Private development is expected to implement the improvements to the central segment of Ripley Street. These funds would allow the public sector to ensure coordination between public and private projects.

**Response** – Funding for the Ice Rink and Pavilion has been included in the CIP. Additional coordination and funding is needed for the Silver Spring Transit Center. Montgomery County, the applicant for the Transit Center, and the applicant for a parcel located along Ripley Street should provide a coordinated facility plan and funding for a road connection between the Transit Center and Ripley Street. The future Project Plan for the Transit Center will provide additional opportunities to coordinate this important project with private development.

## **Bethesda-Chevy Chase/North Bethesda Area**

### **Planning Board Recommendations:**

- **Brookmont Elementary School** - This former school site should be incorporated into Sangamore Local Park if the existing lease is not renewed. Funds for facility planning are needed to determine if the existing school could be used for recreation or other community needs.
- **Friendship Heights Community Center** - The private developer for Wisconsin Place will construct a community center for Montgomery County. Funds are needed to complete the interior furnishings. Funds are also needed for future operation and maintenance of the community center. An advisory committee has been formed to monitor the progress of this effort.
- **North Bethesda Community Center** - The private developer for Rock Spring Park will dedicate a site for a future recreation center. Funds for facility planning and construction are needed for this project.

**Response:** The Brookmont Elementary School will be addressed when the existing lease expires. Joint development projects include the Friendship Heights Community Center and the North Bethesda Community Center.

## **I-270 Corridor Area**

### **Planning Board Recommendations:**

- **Clarksburg Fire Station** - Funds are needed for a “temporary” fire station. The Master Plan recommends that consideration be given to locate a fire station in Clarksburg, close to the Town Center.
- **Clarksburg Library** - Funds are needed for a library in close proximity to other public facilities in the Town Center, and to retail and office areas.
- **Germantown Service District** - An implementation study for a community-level service district to augment maintenance in the Germantown Town Center is needed. The service district would be funded through a service tax on commercial and institutional uses in the Town Center to cover additional trash pick-up, snow clearing, mowing, and landscape maintenance.
- **Shady Grove Elementary School, Casey at Mill Creek** - An elementary school will be needed for the Shady Grove area. Preliminary Plan No. 1-02022: Casey at Mill Creek has reserved an elementary school site until December 2006. Private developers may dedicate this site, but if that does not occur, funds will be needed to acquire the site before the expiration of the reservation period.
- **Shady Grove Stormwater Management Pond** - This existing stormwater management pond is owned by Montgomery County. This pond is used for passive recreation. The Planning Board Draft of the Shady Grove Sector Plan recommends that this area be developed with trails and passive nature-oriented recreation. These recreational improvements to the existing pond are needed to serve the existing community.

**Response:** All of these projects have been included in the CIP. The Clarksburg Library should be located in the Clarksburg Town Center. A final site for this project will be identified in a revised Project Plan for the Clarksburg Town Center to be reviewed in 2006. A custom design will be needed for this library including the use of shared parking. The temporary fire station for Clarksburg has been completed, and funds have been included for a permanent station.

## **Potomac Subregion**

### **Planning Board Recommendations:**

- **North Potomac Community Center** - This project provides for the design and construction of a 33,000 square foot community center and a site of approximately 17 acres on Travilah Road, adjacent to Big Pines Local Park. This project is a priority for North Potomac, as the center is projected to serve a population of over 30,000 citizens, and the area has no existing community center. The project includes a Senior Center, and the need was identified in both the 1998 Park Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and the 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan.
- **Scotland Neighborhood Community Center** - The focal point of the Scotland community is a neighborhood community center that is undersized and inadequate to handle the diverse social and recreational needs of the residents. The site is constricted and the available space in the center is approximately half that for a typical elementary school gymnasium. Expansion and renovation is necessary in order to facilitate athletic and recreational activities for the children and youth population of Scotland. The need for facility planning for this center was identified in the 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan and should be considered a priority.

**Response:** Both of these projects have been included in the CIP.

## **Georgia Avenue Area**

### **Planning Board Recommendation:**

- **Wheaton Community Center** - The Wheaton Community Center is another public facility that needs improvement. A major renovation of this facility is needed. A potential for joint development on the site of the existing Good Counsel High School should be explored. The cost to design, acquire the site, and renovate a portion of the existing Good Counsel High School should be compared with the cost to renovate the existing Wheaton Community Center.

**Response:** This project has been included in the CIP.

## **Eastern County Area**

### **Planning Board Recommendations:**

- **Burtonsville Regional Stormwater Management** - Funds for facility planning and construction are needed for the regional stormwater management system in Burtonsville. This facility would serve the existing elementary school, and other existing and new development.

- **Burtonsville Streetscape Improvements** - Streetscape improvements are needed along Old US 29 and MD 198. In addition to any funds from DPWT, these streetscape funds for improvements are needed in this area to coordinate the future development of the private and public sectors.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements** - Transportation Attachment 1 includes the additional recommendations. In the Sandy Spring/Ashton area a sidewalk along MD 108 between Brooke Road and MD 650; also in the Sandy Spring/Ashton area a pedestrian connection between existing and new residential and commercial development, the Sandy Spring Museum, and Sherwood High School; in the Kemp Mill area a sidewalk along Auth Lane between Stonington Road and Hermleigh Road; and a crosswalk at the intersection of Norwood Road and New Hampshire Avenue should be a high priority.
- **Vital Way Streetscape Improvements** - In addition to funds from DPWT, funds are needed to provide curb, sidewalk and streetscape on this commercial street carrying increased traffic between Randolph Road and New Hampshire Avenue.

**Response:** All of these projects have been included in the CIP.

## Rural Area

### Planning Board Recommendation:

- **Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park Trail** - Funds are needed to connect the Town Center to the Magruder Branch Trail system adjacent to the retail area.

**Response:** This project has been included in the CIP. The Damascus Master Plan that includes this project is presently being reviewed by the County Council.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

During the preparation of the CIP, the Citizens' Advisory Boards sponsored citizen forums in all five of the regional services centers. The staff of the Community-Based Planning Division attended these forums and presented recommendations. The input from these forums and the recommendations included in each area master plan form the basis for the recommendations of the staff of the M-NCPPC and the priorities of the Planning Board.

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### Attachments:

1. Transportation Priorities
2. FY07-12 Priorities Recommended by Montgomery County Planning Board