

MEMORANDUM

February 15, 2011

TO: Health and Human Services Committee
Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Worksession – Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center**

The Health and Human Services (HHS) and Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committees are scheduled to review the County Executive's recommended amendment to the FY11-16 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for the Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center. Representatives from the departments of Public Libraries, Recreation, General Services, and the Office of Management and Budget will be available to discuss this project.

The Executive has recommended the Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center as a new project in his FY11-16 CIP amendments. The recommended project description form (PDF) for the proposed project is attached to the packet at ©1.

BACKGROUND

Wheaton Library Renovation

A project providing for the complete renovation of the Wheaton Library was approved initially as part of the FY05-10 CIP. The Council deleted the project from the FY09-14 CIP because of uncertainty regarding the scope of the project and the possibility of relocation of the Wheaton Library to a site in the Central Business District. The current Wheaton Library site is located on County property.

Wheaton Community Center - Rafferty

The Wheaton Community Center-Rafferty project is currently included in the FY11-16 CIP. See PDF at ©2. The project provides for the renovation and expansion of the Rafferty Center and existing Wheaton Community Recreation Center. The Rafferty Center, a portion of the former Good Counsel High School, was designated for a public purpose as a part of a site development rezoning decision. The Center, along with a renovated Wheaton Recreation Center, were intended to provide the equivalent of a full service community recreation center for the Wheaton-Kemp Mill communities. The current Wheaton Community Recreation Center site is located on M-NCPPC land.

Because the Executive has determined that space limitations and utility and plumbing challenges make the project unfeasible and has recommended a combined Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center project, he proposes closing out the Wheaton CRC-Rafferty project (recommended amendment at ©3) and disappropriating the remaining unencumbered balance of \$423,000.

The Committees may want to ask the Executive about the status and plans for the facility and land dedicated to the project as part of the site development rezoning decision and the adjacent property purchased in conjunction with the project.

Draft Vision 2030 Strategic Plan

The Draft Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for County Parks and Recreation was reviewed by the PHED Committee on February 14. The Plan outlines criteria and methodologies for assessing the need for park and recreation facilities and programs. The Plan recommended refinement of the Recreation and Aquatic Service Model by incorporating flexibility to allow for larger centers to serve more residents when appropriate and identifying opportunities to partner and/or co-locate indoor recreation centers with other institutional facilities like libraries when appropriate.

The prior Recreation Facility Development Plan FY1997-2010 recommended that one center of 24,000 net square feet be developed for every 30,000 unit of population. New Community Recreation Center projects in the CIP, since the approval of the White Oak project, have been approved as 33,000 net square foot centers.

WHEATON LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

The new project proposed by the Executive provides \$250,000 in G.O. Bonds for a feasibility study to analyze a combined facility to include a new Wheaton Library and a new Wheaton Community Recreation Center. The recommended FY12 Capital Appropriation for the project is \$250,000, and the PDF suggests that PAYGO is assumed to fund the feasibility study.

The PDF explains that the Center will be comparable to libraries and recreation centers of similar service needs. Co-location of the facilities may provide for greater efficiencies by programming shared space, e.g., lobbies, meeting rooms, restrooms, parking, and a coffee bar. This could reduce the overall space requirements and operational costs of the facility.

Issues identified for study in the PDF include transferring the Wheaton Recreation Community Center property from M-NCPPC to the County, providing road access to residences, relocating existing roads and access points, determining how storm water management can be provided, and preparing concept layouts for the building and parking on the new combined site.

The PDF states that the "study will take between six months and one year, with the goal being to have sufficient information in summer 2012 to prepare an accurate CIP submission in the FY13-18 cycle."

Executive staff reports that the project was presented at a community meeting in October 2010, and the attendees were very supportive of the proposed project. Responses to Council staff's questions regarding the project are attached at ©4-5.

Discussion Issues

The idea to co-locate the Wheaton library and recreation facilities has potential merit by delivering services in an efficient manner, bringing different segments of the community together, and serving as a community hub. The project is also consistent with the Draft Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for County Parks and Recreation recommendations to co-locate indoor recreation centers with other institutional facilities like libraries. However, Council staff raises the following concerns about the PDF as submitted by the Executive:

- ***Is the scope of the project sufficiently clear to warrant approving it as a stand-alone CIP project?*** Council staff understands that the usual practice is to complete a feasibility study and develop a program of requirements in facility planning before a project is approved as a stand-alone CIP project. Taking this route would give the Committees important information to consider regarding the scope of the project, the magnitude of costs, benefits that would accrue, the schedule for completion, and other technical concerns. Little information has been made available regarding the scope and costs of the project and any potential complicating factors, and a decision to approve the project at this time could ultimately result in unrealistic or unmet expectations in the community.
- ***Is it appropriate to use G.O. bonds to support the feasibility study and prospectively assume that PAYGO will fund it?*** Council staff believes that the proposed feasibility study is not a debt-eligible activity and, as such, is not appropriately funded by G.O. Bonds or PAYGO. Recent changes to the plans for co-located recreation and library facilities generally, e.g., the canceled Davis Library and Community Recreation Center, and to plans for Wheaton library and recreation facilities specifically, and unknown details regarding key aspects of the proposed facility, suggest that there is sufficient uncertainty to render the project debt-ineligible. Moreover, it is unclear why PAYGO is prospectively assumed to fund the feasibility study instead of current revenue when both are essentially cash.

Council staff recommendation:

- **Do not approve the project as submitted.**
- **Postpone approval of the project as a stand-alone project until critical information about scope and costs is available.**
- **Request that the project is included in the Facility Planning-MCG project and provide \$250,000 in current revenue to support a feasibility study.**

If the Committees are interested in approving the project as a stand-alone CIP project, Council staff recommends changing the source of funding for the feasibility study to current revenue.

Recommended

Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center -- No. 361202

Category
Subcategory
Administering Agency
Planning Area

Culture and Recreation
Libraries
General Services
Kensington-Wheaton

Date Last Modified
Required Adequate Public Facility
Relocation Impact
Status

January 10, 2011
No
None.
Planning Stage

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY10	Rem. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	250	0	0	250	0	250	0	0	0	0	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	250	0	0	250	0	250	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

G.O. Bonds	250	0	0	250	0	250	0	0	0	0	0
Total	250	0	0	250	0	250	0	0	0	0	0

DESCRIPTION

This project will provide for a Feasibility Study to analyze and study a combined facility to include a new Wheaton Library and a new Wheaton Community Recreation Center.

The Library and the Recreation Center will be comparable to libraries and recreation centers of similar service needs. These building sizes will be analyzed in greater detail to see what efficiencies of area and program can be made due to the shared use of some spaces. These could include lobbies, meeting rooms, restrooms, a coffee bar and parking which could reduce the overall space requirements and the operational costs.

Other issues to be studied include the transfer of the Wheaton Recreation Community Center property from M-NCPPC to the County, providing road access to the residences by relocating existing roads and access, determining how storm water management can be provided, and preparing concept layouts for the building and parking on the new combined site.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

The study will take between six months and one year, with the goal being to have sufficient information in summer 2012 to prepare an accurate CIP submission in the FY13-18 cycle.

JUSTIFICATION

The Department of Public Libraries strategic facilities plan identified the Wheaton Library for renovation in 2005, 20 years after the last renovation. The library circulates approximately 432,000 items per year and has about 585,000 visits by the public each year. The Wheaton Library is one of the busier libraries in Montgomery County. The Friends of the Library book sale is located on the lower level as is a satellite office of the Gilchrist Center. There are serious moisture problems and the building does not meet current mechanical, safety and building codes. The mechanical, elevator and HVAC systems are outdated and worn, and they are not energy efficient. The facility was opened in 1960 and was renovated in 1985. It is in need of space rearrangement to meet current library information needs.

The Department of Recreation has operated the existing Wheaton Recreation Center, owned by the M-NCPPC, for many years. As early as 1997, this facility was designated for replacement with a larger full service facility, originally included in Facility Planning and Site Evaluation projects as the Kemp Mill (later Wheaton/Kemp Mill) Community Recreation Center. In the 2005 update to the Department's facility plan and in the FY07-12 CIP, a "Wheaton Area Recreation Facilities" study was included in the MCG Facility Planning Project #508768 for this purpose. That study included site and structure, stabilization and design development for future renovation, remodeling, and expansion of the Wheaton Community Recreation Center - Rafferty to provide an additional recreation facility to complement the existing facility. After review of the Rafferty component, space limitations, utility and plumbing challenges did not make it feasible to complete the project on its current site. A decision was made to pursue an alternative combined facility.

FISCAL NOTE

The site for the present Wheaton Library is presently owned by the County. The site of the present Wheaton Recreation Community Center is owned by M-NCPPC. The issues associated with the transfer of the property will be identified during this feasibility study. PAYGO is assumed to fund the feasibility study.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

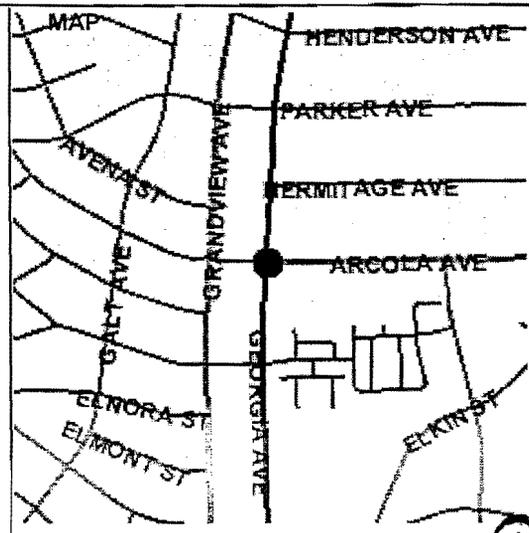
- A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA

Date First Appropriation	FY12	(\$000)
First Cost Estimate		
Current Scope	FY12	250
Last FY's Cost Estimate		0
Appropriation Request	FY12	250
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		0
Expenditures / Encumbrances		0
Unencumbered Balance		0
Partial Closeout Thru	FY09	0
New Partial Closeout	FY10	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

COORDINATION

Department of General Services
Department of Libraries
Department of Recreation
Department of Transportation
M-NCPPC
State Highways
Mid-County Regional Services Center
WSSC
Pepco



Approved

Wheaton Community Recreation Center - Rafferty -- No. 720800

Category
Subcategory
Administering Agency
Planning Area

Culture and Recreation
Recreation
General Services
Kensington-Wheaton

Date Last Modified
Required Adequate Public Facility
Relocation Impact
Status

January 10, 2010
No
None.
Planning Stage

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY09	Est. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	560	2	520	38	38	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land	534	6	528	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,094	8	1,048	38	38	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

G.O. Bonds	1,094	8	1,048	38	38	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,094	8	1,048	38	38	0	0	0	0	0	0

DESCRIPTION

This project provides for the design for renovation and expansion of the the Rafferty (Phase 1) and Wheaton Recreation (Phase 2) Centers. The Rafferty Center, a portion of the former Good Counsel High School, was designated for dedication for a public purpose as a part of a recent site development rezoning decision. The County has determined that it will provide additional recreation services to the Wheaton-Kemp Mill communities by using the Rafferty center to create a second Community Recreation Center to be used in tandem with the existing Wheaton Recreation Center. The existing Wheaton Recreation Center is owned by M-NCPPC and operated by the County Recreation Department. Renovation and expansion of the Rafferty facility, along with future renovations of the existing center will provide, in two parts, a full service Community Recreation Center (of approximately 33,000 net square feet) consistent with the provisions of the Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2005 Update.

JUSTIFICATION

The Department has operated the existing Wheaton Recreation Center, owned by the M-NCPPC, for many years. As early as 1997, this facility was designated for replacement with a larger full service facility, originally included in Facility Planning and Site Evaluation projects as the Kemp Mill (later Wheaton/Kemp Mill) Community Recreation Center. In the 2005 update to the Department's facility plan and in the FY07-12 CIP, a "Wheaton Area Recreation Facilities" study was included in the MCG Facility Planning Project #508768 for this purpose. The current concept includes site and structure, stabilization and design development for future renovation, remodeling, and expansion of the Wheaton Community Recreation Center - Rafferty to provide an additional recreation facility to complement the existing facility.

OTHER

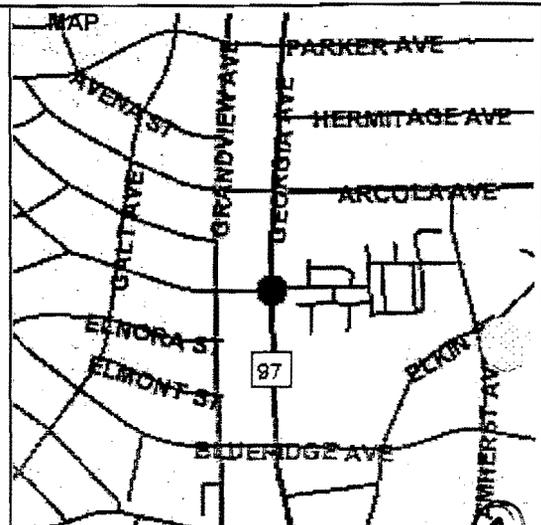
No funds may be expended for on-site improvements until an agreement providing for the transfer of the property to the County has been executed.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA		
Date First Appropriation	FY08	(\$000)
First Cost Estimate		
Current Scope	FY09	1,094
Last FY's Cost Estimate		1,094
Appropriation Request	FY11	0
Appropriation Request Est.	FY12	0
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		1,094
Expenditures / Encumbrances		543
Unencumbered Balance		551
Partial Closeout Thru	FY08	0
New Partial Closeout	FY09	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

COORDINATION
 Department of General Services
 Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
 Department of Recreation
 Mid-County Regional Services Center



Recommended
Wheaton Community Recreation Center - Rafferty -- No. 720800

Category
 Subcategory
 Administering Agency
 Planning Area

Culture and Recreation
 Recreation
 General Services
 Kensington-Wheaton

Date Last Modified
 Required Adequate Public Facility
 Relocation Impact
 Status

January 07, 2011
 No
 None.
 Planning Stage

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY10	Rem. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	19	8	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land	540	540	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	562	551	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

G.O. Bonds	562	551	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	562	551	11	0							

DESCRIPTION

This project provides for the design for renovation and expansion of the the Rafferty (Phase 1) and Wheaton Recreation (Phase 2) Centers. The Rafferty Center, a portion of the former Good Counsel High School, was designated for dedication for a public purpose as a part of a recent site development rezoning decision. The County has determined that it will provide additional recreation services to the Wheaton-Kemp Mill communities by using the Rafferty center to create a second Community Recreation Center to be used in tandem with the existing Wheaton Recreation Center. The existing Wheaton Recreation Center is owned by M-NCPPC and operated by the County Recreation Department. Renovation and expansion of the Rafferty facility, along with future renovations of the existing center will provide, in two parts, a full service Community Recreation Center (of approximately 33,000 net square feet) consistent with the provisions of the Montgomery County Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2005 Update.

COST CHANGE

This project is recommended for closeout due to the creation of a new project (Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center, project #361202) that will fund a feasibility study for a combined recreation and library facility.

JUSTIFICATION

The Department has operated the existing Wheaton Recreation Center, owned by the M-NCPPC, for many years. As early as 1997, this facility was designated for replacement with a larger full service facility, originally included in Facility Planning and Site Evaluation projects as the Kemp Mill (later Wheaton/Kemp Mill) Community Recreation Center. In the 2005 update to the Department's facility plan and in the FY07-12 CIP, a "Wheaton Area Recreation Facilities" study was included in the MCG Facility Planning Project #508768 for this purpose. The concept included site and structure, stabilization and design development for future renovation, remodeling, and expansion of the Wheaton Community Recreation Center - Rafferty to provide an additional recreation facility to complement the existing facility.

OTHER

No funds may be expended for on-site improvements until an agreement providing for the transfer of the property to the County has been executed.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

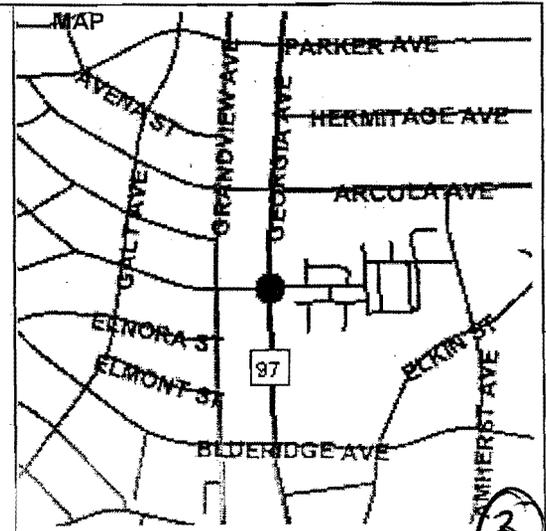
- A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA

Date First Appropriation	FY08	(\$000)
First Cost Estimate		
Current Scope	FY09	1,094
Last FY's Cost Estimate		1,094
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Appropriation Request	FY12	-423
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
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Cumulative Appropriation		985
Expenditures / Encumbrances		562
Unencumbered Balance		423
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Partial Closeout Thru	FY09	0
New Partial Closeout	FY10	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

COORDINATION

Department of General Services
 Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
 Department of Recreation
 Mid-County Regional Services Center



- This is being researched.

Wheaton

1. Why is this project proposed as a stand-alone CIP project if a feasibility study has not yet been completed? How much is estimated to be used on the feasibility study, and why has PAYGO been prospectively assumed to be the source of funds for the feasibility study?
 - a. This project was presented at a community meeting in October 2010. The attendees at that meeting were very supportive of the proposed joint library/recreation center project. There is a need to examine its parameters and quantify its costs for the reasons given below.
 - b. PAYGO is assumed to provide flexibility, although it is fully expected that a project will result.
2. Why is the Executive recommending the transfer of property from M-NCPPC?
 - a. The current Wheaton Recreation Center is on MNCPPC land and the intention of the combined Library and Recreation center would be to combine the current library site and the recreation center site into one property, realigning roads as needed, to create one larger site to serve both uses. In exchange for this property, the County would “trade” another County property with MNCPPC which they could develop as a park.
3. What is the current “ballpark” estimate for this project?
 - a. There is no estimate – that is why the feasibility study must be done. See next response for further information.
4. What total amount of funding is anticipated for the design of the project?
 - a. The feasibility study will determine what is required. If there are land transfer and new roads and intersections required, this could affect the consultant costs.

Facility Planning: MCG

1. Please provide the expenditure schedule and timeline for completion of the Library projects in Facility Planning including the Shady Grove Library.
 - a. Shady Grove: This is on hold pending refinement of project need and site determination.
2. Has the Wheaton Library study in Facility Planning been completed? If not, will it continue to be a project in the Facility Planning -MCG project given that the Executive has recommended as a stand-alone project the Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center?

- a. No – it was not done as a study in Facility Planning.
- b. No, it will not continue in the Facility Planning project. Because of the complexity of the issues it was determined that a study be conducted in a stand-alone project.