

AGENDA ITEM #13
April 5, 2011

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

MEMORANDUM

April 1, 2011

TO: County Council

FROM:  Marlene Michaelson, Senior Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: Semi-Annual Report of the Planning Board

The Semi-Annual Report of the Planning Board to the Council typically occurs in the spring and fall each year, and is an opportunity for the Planning Board to present its proposed work program and brief the Council on major planning and parks issues before the Board. The report is attached on © 1 to 21. A color copy of the report is available on the Council's website. The Council should note that the workprogram presented in the report assumes funding at the level requested by the Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). Significant changes in the workprogram may be possible if the agency is required to take the reductions recommended by the Executive.¹

PLANNING DEPARTMENT ISSUES

The Planning Department portion of the Semi-Annual Report appears on © 5 to 14 of the Report. The Report highlights changes due to the reorganization and increased efficiency, including the rollout of "Project Dox" to allow multiple agencies to view development applications and submit comments online. The graph on © 7 highlights the decrease in development applications from 2005 to 2011; © 8 addresses the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and Commercial/Residential (CR) zones; and © 8-9 and 12 to 14 discuss the master plan program. Circles 10-11 describe subdivision staging and transportation analysis. While Staff agrees that it may be appropriate to initiate a limited BRT function master plan before undertaking a comprehensive functional master plan amendment, Staff believes the plan should include the important routes, not necessarily those that are the easiest to plan or enjoy general consensus.

Master Plan Schedule

The Master Plan Schedule (assuming full funding as requested by M-NCPPC) appears on a chart on page 14 in the Report. The table that appears below compares the master plan schedule presented to the

¹ It is too early to indicate what portion of the reductions will be absorbed by changes in compensation and benefits and what portion will require changes to the workprogram and/or services provided by the agency.

Council during the October 2010 Semi-Annual Report meeting and the proposed new schedule for the **Council's receipt of master plans from the County Executive**. The date that the Plan is expected to be transmitted from the Executive to the Council is **shown in red** on the chart on © 14. Although the Council passed legislation that allows it to set a public hearing for a master plan without waiting 60 days for the receipt of the Executive's fiscal impact statement, this schedule assumes the full 60-day review period for the Executive.

The only change in schedule from the one last approved by the Council in October 2010 is the one month delay in the Burtonsville Neighborhood Plan, since they now recommend it be developed as a master plan to be approved by the Council. (Originally, the Planning Department did not think this neighborhood plan would require any change that requires Council master plan approval (e.g., a change in zoning).) The Planning Department will be sending to the Council its non-recommended reductions to meet the Executive-recommended budget, and Staff assumes it will include delays in the master plan program. The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee will begin their discussion of the M-NCPPC budget and workprogram on April 11 and will consider any changes in the master plan schedule due to budget reductions at that time.

DATE FOR COUNCIL RECEIPT OF MASTER PLANS*

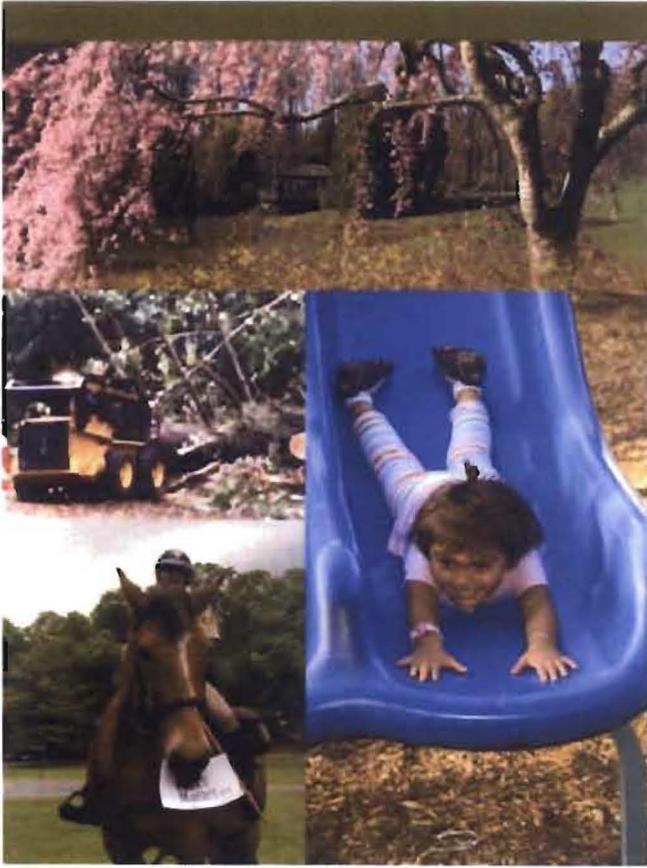
Master Plan/Study	October 2010 Approved	April 2011 Recommended
Takoma/Langley Crossroads	January 2011	January 2011
Wheaton CBD/Metro Center	June 2011	June 2011
Clarksburg Amendment (added 2/11)		July 2011
Kensington (Revised schedule)	August 2011	August 2011
Purple Line Station Area - Long Branch	November 2011	November 2011
Neighborhood Plan Burtonsville	November 2011	December 2011
Purple Line Station Area - Chevy Chase Lake	April 2012	April 2012
Master Plan of Highways	April 2012	April 2012
Glenmont Sector Plan	January 2013	January 2013
East County Science Center	April 2013	April 2013
White Flint Phase II	July 2013	July 2013
Purple Line Station Area – Brookeville Road - Lyttonsville	November 2013	November 2013
Green Infrastructure	February 2014	February 2014
Gaithersburg East – Montgomery Village	April 2014	April 2014
Kensington/Wheaton	Beyond 2014	Beyond 2014
Westbard Sector Plan	Beyond 2014	Beyond 2014

*Estimated Date County Executive Transmits Plan to County Council (shown in red on the chart on page 14 of the Semi-Annual Report)

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS

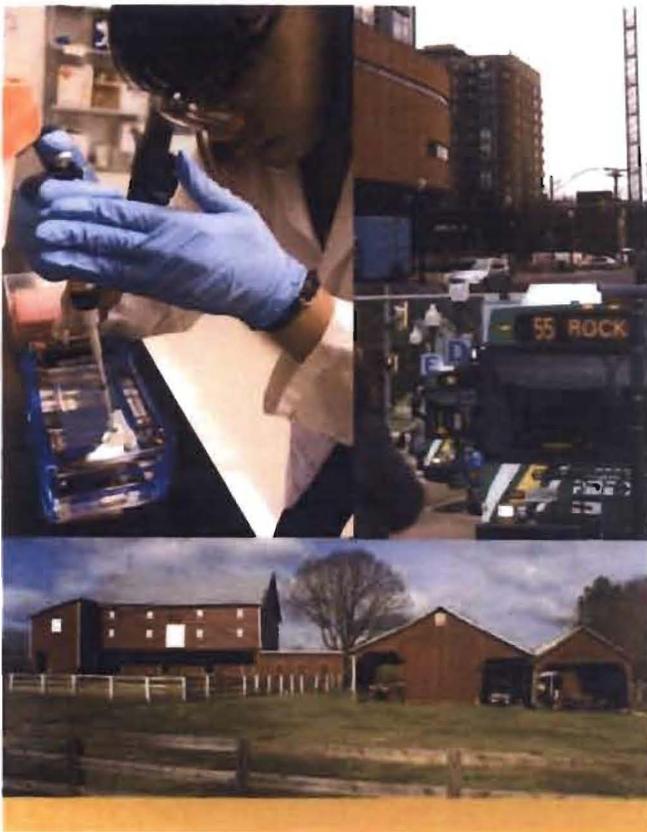
The Department of Parks Semi-Annual Report appears on © 15 to 21. The report focuses on prior accomplishments (© 15 to 17). In particular, they note that the Enterprise Fund has covered all operating and capital costs for the past two years; they have increased stewardship support for historic sites, and continue to focus on minimizing costs and maximizing revenues. New projects in South Germantown Recreational Park include the Miracle League Field and the Jack Schore Community Tennis Center. Five new community garden sites are opening this spring, including three on public school sites. Circle 18 describes future plans related to developing a cost recovery strategy for core services, emphasizing alternative funding opportunities, addressing the demands of new populations, and collaborating with County partners to achieve efficiencies and cost-savings.

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Semi-Annual Report

President Ervin and Members of the Council:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to meet with you again to discuss the progress of the Planning Department and Department of Parks during our spring semi-annual presentation.

In FY2011, we have continued to provide the high-quality professional planning services and park management the County has relied on from M-NCPPC for more than 80 years, despite sharply reduced resources and corresponding program reductions.

The Planning Department work program outlines several projects that will help advance economic prosperity in the County; as planning and transportation professionals, we set a solid foundation for economic recovery.

A priority among those projects is the implementation of the White Flint Sector Plan, perhaps the most impactful work we are undertaking in the coming months. Staff and the Planning Board have been hard at work developing and implementing the staging program that encourages new applications at a steady pace that does not outstrip the area's transportation capacity. We are on track to have the transportation approval mechanism in place by the July deadline.

Planners also are progressing on master plans that will encourage growth around Purple Line stations – Takoma Langley Crossroads, Long Branch and Chevy Chase Lake – as well as the East County Science Center. In the ECSC plan, we will recommend ways to jumpstart the East County's economy to take advantage of the Food and Drug Administration relocation.

In the upcoming work program, we would like to discuss a range of important transportation projects that are vital to improving the County's mobility – studying Bus Rapid Transit, amendments to the Master Plan of Highways that include BRT, and developing a Transportation Policy Area Review analysis to replace Policy Area Mobility Review.

Parks staff has worked hard to meet the challenges imposed by the significant, double-digit budget cut received in FY11: our Enterprise Division is projecting a net gain in FY12, for the third year in a row, and we have secured hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants and state funding, increased volunteerism by 8%, reduced utility costs by another \$440,000, relocated and consolidated staff from leased spaces, and absorbed contract maintenance work that had to be eliminated, as well as the additional work to support and manage newly opened parks. It has been a difficult year, and I would like to recognize both Parks and Planning staff for their dedication and hard work.

I continue to be troubled by the recent recommendations from the Executive Branch and the Organizational Reform Commission to transfer Park Police and "park user services" to County government. There is no plan, no cost analysis, and no legitimate basis for taking apart a highly functional, efficient parks operation. No cost savings are likely to be achieved in FY12 and there are no proven cost-savings in the long term. Our agency has been recognized nationally for its high-quality services and programs. More than 90% of the county's residents visit our parks each year, most more than once. We consistently receive high marks from residents and users in the County Executive's surveys. We should all be taking credit for this amazing park system and leveraging its reputation to boost the County's economic development effort, rather than dismantling such a valued community asset.



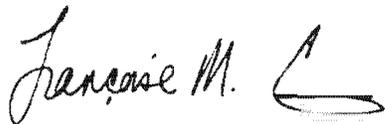
For FY12, the County Executive has recommended a 1.9% reduction for M-NCPPC below FY11 funding levels. This reduction appears slight only because of the severe cuts we have already taken in FY11: 1.9% below our FY11 level is actually a 13.4% reduction below our FY10 funding level.

The Planning Department's work plan would be gravely impacted if the County Executive's proposed FY12 budget reduction were to be approved. In fact, if approved, the Department's workforce will have been cut 40 percent from its FY10 level. This reduction also represents an effective cut of more than \$10 million for Montgomery Parks, largely due to increased pension contributions, pre-funding retiree health benefits, operating impacts from newly opened parks, and the elimination or reduction of furlough.

We are still analyzing the full implications of such a significant cut. Certainly, this would undermine our role as planners in setting economic development in motion, and threaten our ability to keep our parks safe and clean.

We look forward to discussing the Council's goals and how the Planning and Parks Departments can best meet them, as well as other issues raised by the departmental reports that follow, at the semi-annual meeting on April 5.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Françoise M. Carrier". The signature is written in black ink and includes a stylized flourish at the end.

Françoise Carrier
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board

planning

meeting the budget challenge

The Planning Department has implemented a number of strategies to respond to reduced resources, including a comprehensive reorganization and efficiency improvements. The reorganization and making better use of technology – in addition to furloughs, a retirement incentive program and layoffs – came in response to a nearly 20-percent workforce reduction in FY11.

As we look ahead, we plan to emphasize the Department's role in setting the foundation for economic growth while preserving the County's quality of life. The best planning provides for growth in areas where development makes sense; White Flint is the latest example of how innovative planning attracts development to an area that is served by transit and poised for renewal.

Our emphasis in the months ahead will focus on master plans in areas that offer potential to capitalize on existing investment in infrastructure and other economic opportunities. This includes the Purple Line as well as the East County, per Council's direction. The Department reorganization also has strengthened staff's ability to process applications efficiently at current staffing levels for Planning Board consideration.

State leaders are supportive of the way Montgomery County maintains an open planning process. Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown was quoted in February as saying he sees great value in independent, transparent planning at the county level, calling out the need for an autonomous planning process that culminates with County Council decisions.

The Department leadership and staff have worked to remain flexible and responsive despite shrinking resources. In light of the County Executive's proposed FY12 budget reduction of 13 percent, the Department will face challenges in meeting the goals of an ambitious work program. If the Executive's proposed budget were approved, the Department's workforce complement would drop to 40 percent of its FY10 level.

At the semi-annual presentation on April 5, we will be prepared to review the Department's work program and re-assess what the Planning Department can and should accomplish in the coming year.



The Department reorganized into three area teams to improve its efficiency.

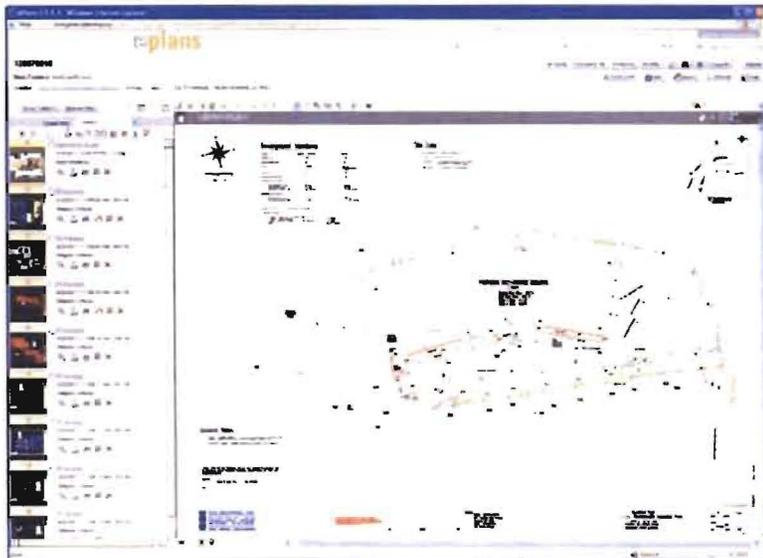
efficiency

The Department has adopted a number of efficiency improvements. Our reorganization into three area-based groups allows us to undertake regulatory and community planning functions in teams, requiring staff to multi-task to better respond to community needs.

The reorganization created a Development Application and Regulatory Coordination division that improves efficiency by becoming a central place for distributing notices and keeping plans on track as they move through analysis, the DRC and, ultimately, to Planning Board consideration.

To provide information to the public at a lower cost, reduce staff time spent responding to requests and lower printing costs, we are using our website, MontgomeryPlanning.org, in a number of user-friendly ways:

- To help people track development applications
- To package all area news – pending applications, master plans undergoing amendment, community outreach activities, and Planning Board agendas – on each area page
- To track the location of forest conservation easements
- To publicize our analysis of the 2010 U.S. Census results as well as ongoing trendsheets summarizing unemployment, housing and population statistics



In recent months, staff has worked on the customized programming of Eplans, which uses a software program called Project Dox to facilitate the electronic submittal and review of development applications. Project Dox is a friendly, web-based application that makes it easy for users at all technical skill levels to communicate throughout the review process. All submitted project information is centralized in one location so it becomes visible and accessible to everyone who needs it.

Multiple users can access the same information at the same time, and, as each reviewing agency submits comments to the relevant electronic page, those comments immediately become visible. Cost savings result from the fact that any change to a document or image is automatically identified, greatly simplifying the review process and enhancing accuracy.

The Planning Department funded both the cost of the software and training for all the departments that will use it, including the Department of Permitting Services, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Environmental Protection. The new software has been integrated with Hansen, the Department's existing database management program, and will keep track of how long each stage in the review process takes. Work is underway that will also allow fees to be paid electronically. The goal is to go live with all the relevant plan types by year's end.

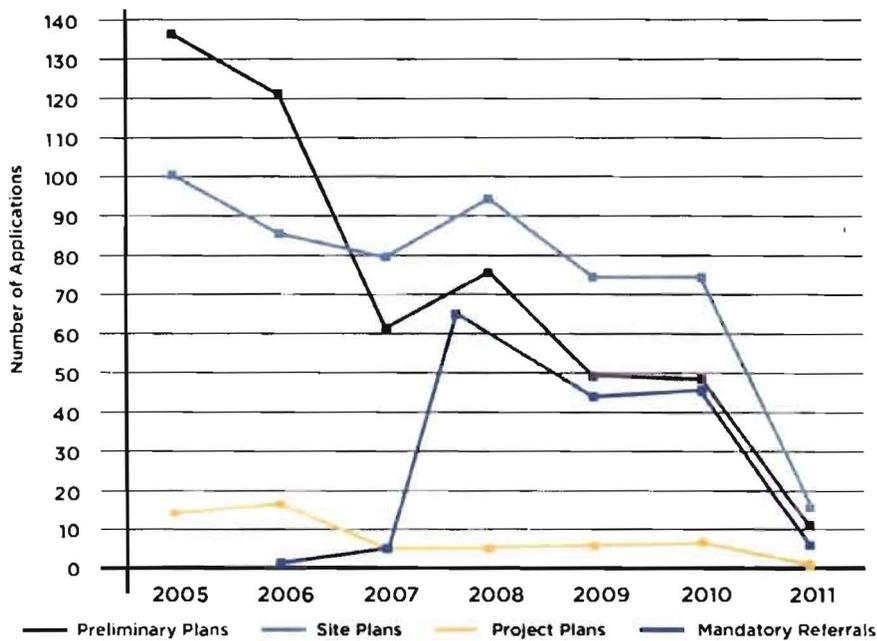
The forest conservation easement online locator is a valuable, free tool that informs the public about the location of easements, strengthening the county's forest conservation goals. Featured in a national GIS trade journal, the forest conservation easement locator has been viewed 10,366 times since it was posted in December 2009. People spent an average of four minutes on the page, indicating they were using the tool.

Staff will be recommending ways to improve the mandatory referral process to save money and processing time. Ideas include reducing the need for traffic studies for schools, expanding the ability for staff to process mandatory referrals administratively, providing a single source of tracking and intake, and communicating through one point of contact.

work in progress

regulatory
development applications

The rate of development application submittals has remained steady since the last report in fall 2010. In the past six months, planning staff and the legal department have prepared and submitted 51 resolutions for Board adoption. The seven-year trend, however, has been downward.



Among the more than 50 applications taken to the Planning Board in the last six months, a highlight was the preliminary plan for the Falklands North mixed-use development in Silver Spring. The Falklands application incorporated the historic preservation plan devised by the Planning Board and Council, which re-develops the north parcel but leaves the south parcel preserved. The development will total 70,000 square feet of retail and 1,250 dwelling units (including 157 MPDUs) on 9.7 acres within 300 yards of the Silver Spring Metro station.

zoning rewrite project

The multi-year Zoning Rewrite Project to update the County's antiquated Zoning Code is proceeding, with two modules delivered from the consulting team and reviewed by the Zoning Advisory Panel and the Council's Zoning Text Amendment Advisers. A consolidated public review draft is anticipated by year's end.

The Department is in the code drafting phase of the project, and has released draft sections of *Zoning District Regulations and Uses and Use Standards*, both for the Agricultural and Residential zones. Sections of the new code are drafted by our consultant, Code Studio, then released to the ZAP and ZTA Advisers as discussion pieces. Each section is posted at ZoningMontgomery.org, alongside a comment board that creates an online forum for public input.

The Zoning Rewrite team has made public outreach and input a priority since the beginning of the project. To date, staff has participated in more than 60 public meetings.

commercial residential zones

Planners worked closely with neighborhoods, municipalities, stakeholders, and the Planning Board over several months to develop a Commercial Residential Zone Zoning Text Amendment. The proposed changes encourage an appropriate mix of housing and commercial services at varying densities and heights for different areas, and provide predictability of use and public benefits for a variety of contexts. The Planning Board draft of the CR Zones went to the Council in early March and is scheduled for Council hearing in late May.



Allowing more opportunities for residential units to be built over first-story retail is one of the goals of the Commercial Residential Zones.

master plans

Planners are working on master plans and staging mechanisms, following approved work plans, in the following areas:

- Kensington Sector Plan – revised zoning reviewed and approved by the Planning Board March 17
- Wheaton & Vicinity Master Plan – Planning Board draft to transmit to Council in April
- Three Purple Line station area plans are moving ahead in various stages. Given that the Purple Line will have a profound impact in each of these well-established neighborhoods, the following plans will propose different solutions to accommodate change:
 - the Takoma/Langley Crossroads plan was sent back to update the Commercial Residential zone references; Planning Board will review in April
 - the staff draft of the Long Branch Sector Plan, which encompasses two future Purple Line stations, is nearing completion
 - the Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plan staff recommendations are underway, informed by a March community design workshop that drew 150 participants
- East County Science Center – the Planning Board approved the scope of work in January; the Planning Board has appointed a Citizens Advisory Committee and staff are planning an ambitious outreach program

- **White Flint Staging** – The approved and adopted sector plan requires, as part of the staging plan, that the Planning Board develop a transportation approval mechanism and a biennial monitoring program. Establishing the protocols to manage the transportation approval mechanism has required considerable analysis and nine Planning Board worksessions. The end result will be an innovative and efficient system of managing limited capacity, with a thorough and current online tracking system and regular status reports. Staff and the Planning Board are on track to have the transportation approval mechanism and biennial monitoring program in place by July, the one-year deadline established in the sector plan. The Planning Board has transmitted to the Council amendments to the Subdivision Staging Policy necessary to implement the transportation approval mechanism.

Developer BF Saul recently purchased a 63,886-square-foot retail center in White Flint for \$33.25 million. The company has not announced imminent plans for development, but has been quoted in local newspapers citing interest in being part of a developing White Flint.



The Mid-Pike Plaza Sketch Plan calls for 1,725 dwelling units and 1,542,388 square feet of office/commercial.

- **Great Seneca Science Corridor Staging** – The approved and adopted master plan requires completion of numerous “trigger” elements before the Life Sciences Center can be opened to new development. These elements include establishing an advisory committee to provide input to the Planning Board and County Council on master plan implementation; development of a biennial monitoring program to track development, facilities, amenities and traffic impacts in the Life Sciences Center; determining a baseline non-auto driver mode share; and funding the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District (TMD). Planning staff has been conducting regular meetings of the advisory committee, is working with County Department of Transportation staff on TMD and mode share issues, and is on track to have the monitoring plan developed by the July 20, 2011 deadline established by County Council Resolution. Once the Stage 1 triggers are met, development in the Life Sciences Center can proceed in four stages; the remaining primary triggers are associated with milestones for funding and constructing the Corridor Cities Transitway. Staff also is drafting staging guidelines with input from the Planning Board.

See the master plan project schedule, page 12, for the Department’s recommendation on future community planning work.

subdivision staging / transportation analysis



The biannual Growth Policy, renamed the Subdivision Staging Plan and moved to a quadrennial schedule, is expected to include a Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR) analysis. TPAR is proposed to replace Policy Area Mobility Review to create more predictable and policy-oriented transportation mitigation requirements within policy areas. TPAR would establish fees tied to smart growth policy goals, and help the County prioritize and fund its major transportation needs by moving from a system of small, discrete actions to a broader collection system that funds large capital project needs.

The PHED Committee requested that the Department consider accelerating the formation and implementation of TPAR ahead of the next Subdivision Staging policy delivery. To achieve that, transportation staff would either require additional resources or need to defer other priority master plan analyses.

Another transportation management tool, the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR), identifies site-specific transportation mitigation requirements for subdivision cases, and is due for reassessment to consider alternative approaches that may produce better information. It would be helpful to consider TPAR and LATR together, as the tests are complementary.

Council interest in implementing a comprehensive bus rapid transit network will require an amendment to the Master Plan of Highways (MPOH). A comprehensive bus rapid transit amendment to the MPOH requires identifying typical sections, determining additional right of way needs and identifying station locations. The consultant's study, nearing completion, provides a starting point for this effort, and may provide appropriate plan guidance for some corridors. However, it will not be sufficient for the full system. Other work needed to feed into the BRT work includes the following:

- In the East County Science Center area, we are concurrently revising both the transit network and the land use plan concepts in a comprehensive approach to TOD.
- In many locations where potential ridership is high but right-of-way is scarce, the County needs to determine what objectives BRT should serve, and whether what we want most is the system we can implement the most quickly, or the system that best meets our longer term needs – this is the trade-off that leads to a variety of recommendations along Rockville Pike, for instance.

The Executive's Transit Task Force will address several basic questions about BRT system objectives and implementation strategy during spring and summer 2011, which will help frame these decisions.

We believe the BRT amendment process should be bifurcated. Priority routes and segments enjoying general consensus can be incorporated within a Limited BRT Amendment that could replace the Master Plan of Highways in our FY 12 budget to get the implementation process moving forward. More challenging details would be incorporated in a subsequent Comprehensive BRT Amendment. The Task Force effort will recommend a BRT prioritization process that can help define the scope for both the Limited BRT Amendment and the Comprehensive BRT Amendment.



Staff recommends maintaining the subdivision staging policy schedule adopted by the Council in fall 2010, which calls for a revision to the policy in fall of 2012. This will allow the Executive Branch to complete its analysis of both Countywide development costs and recommendations for non-auto considerations under the current TPAR proposal. Our staff will work concurrently to investigate alternative processes this summer, and we will return to stakeholders with initial recommendations on both elements in September.

We expect some involved discussions on those initial recommendations, as the analysis of TPAR and LATR adequacy in master plans will be challenging. Early results of TPAR suggest that the Bethesda / Chevy Chase policy area (the location of the Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plan) is out of balance for current, 2020, and 2040 horizon years, and since congestion in this area is predominantly outside the central business districts, balance cannot logically be created simply by a redefinition of urban area boundaries. Both TPAR and LATR discussions would benefit from correlation with the Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plan, given the interest in the community to connect smart growth with mobility.

To accelerate the TPAR analyses significantly, the Planning Department would need to:

- Defer FY 11 and FY 12 projects, such as upgrading the travel forecasting model to the new MWCOC Version 2.3 edition, issuing a new Highway Mobility Report, addressing the White Flint CLATR requirement, and master plan efforts previously programmed; or
- Quickly obtain consulting assistance (approximately \$150,000 each to analyze LATR on the current schedule and to accelerate TPAR by two to four months); or
- Reduce the time available for stakeholder comment. TPAR proposes a new system similar to the White Flint Special Taxing District. Staff is concerned that the amount of coordination with external stakeholders is limited, considering the fact that stakeholder consensus is typically broad when concepts are in formative stages, but more challenging when actual dollar values are laid out on the page.

Considering all three of these constraints in tandem, the Department recommends the following, assuming that the final budget allocation for FY 12 does not require a significant reduction in force:

- A Limited BRT Amendment to the MPOH in FY12, to be followed by a Comprehensive Amendment
- Retaining the TPAR analysis as part of the quadrennial Subdivision Staging Policy schedule adopted by the County Council in 2010, with delivery in fall 2012, and adding to it an analysis of potential travel-time-based alternatives/improvements to LATR.

looking ahead

Staff have been implementing ways to compensate for reduced staffing levels. Automated systems in the works like Project Dox, the online Development Finder, and development activity tracking are all geared to providing more self-help tools and reducing staff time spent in reviewing plans or answering inquiries. These efforts have both short- and long-term benefits, not just in meeting budget challenges, but in creating more efficient government.

In the long term, the County needs to explore ways to better implement development reviews in the context of those master plans that have not been updated within the last 10 years and may have limitations that are in conflict with market forces that have changed dramatically since 2000. Some of those plans are too specific about what could happen on a particular property or have unrealistic triggers.

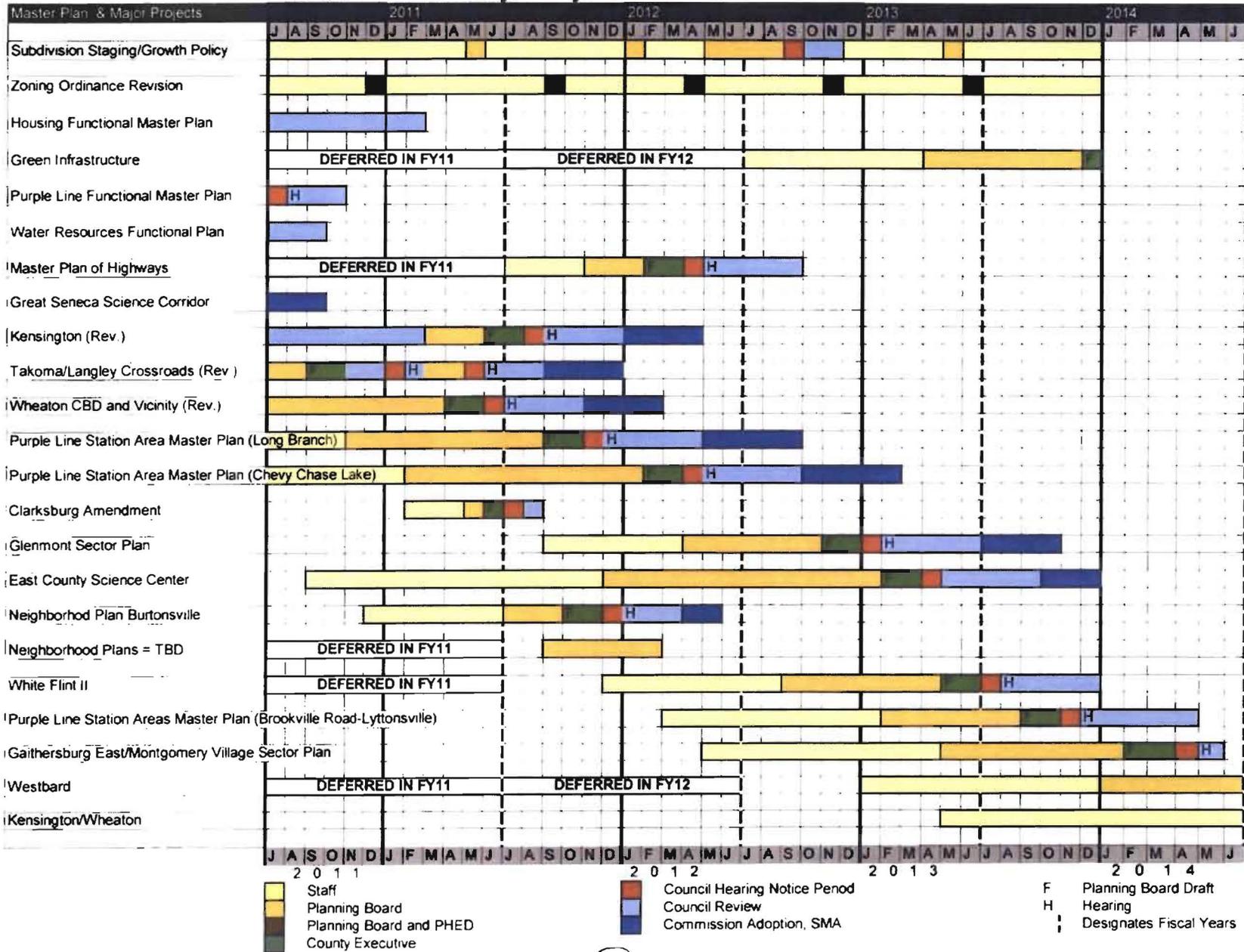
Planning Department projects – current / proposed

Project	Timeline Start	End	Funding (FY11 workyears)	Issues
MASTER PLANS IN PROGRESS				
Wheaton CBD		to Council April 2011	3.90	
Takoma Langley Crossroads		to Council May 2011	3.10	Revised Sector Plan with CR Zones
Kensington		to Council June 2011	1.00	Revised Sector Plan with CR Zones
Clarksburg Amendment		to Council June 2011	2.75	Retail staging; resources allocated to special projects
Long Branch		to Council fall 2011	3.70	Staff recommends one-month delay
Chevy Chase Lake		to Council winter 2012	3.55	
East County Science Ctr		to Council 2013	6.20	
		Staff is proposing that this neighborhood study become a formal amendment to the Fairland Master Plan to be completed Dec. 2011		Comprehensive changes to zoning may be required; staff recommends to deliver the study and amendment by December
MASTER PLANS PROPOSED				
Neighborhood Plans TBD	Start FY 2012		1.40*	
Brookville Road/Lyttonsville	Start FY 2012		1.05*	
Purple Line Area Plan	Start FY 2012		1.90*	
Glenmont	Start FY 2012		2.45*	
White Flint II	Start FY 2012		0.40*	
Gaithersburg East	Start FY 2012			As now scheduled, delivery of plan and SMA cannot be completed prior to the election. Staff recommends delaying delivery until after the election.
Burtonsville N'hood Plan	to Council Dec. 2011		2.50**	Currently shown as an area study, the Planning Board recommends it as a master plan amendment, using the existing work years

*Proposed FY12 budget

**1.15 WY proposed FY12 budget

Master Plans and Major Projects Schedule



Parks

What we've done

FY11 has been a challenging year for Montgomery Parks. The significant 11.8% reduction in funding from FY10 levels has resulted in less staff and fewer resources to manage our considerable assets, making it much more difficult for us to maintain acceptable service levels. Overall, we have reduced our work years by 10% over the past decade, despite adding significant park acreage and management responsibilities (see inset chart from OLO report 2011-2). Nevertheless, there is still some good news to report:

Tax Supported Workyears

	FY02	FY11	Percent Change
All Agencies	26,702	29,400	+10%
MCPS	17,085	18,439	+ 14%
County Government	7,347	7,374	+ 0.4%
Montgomery College	1,363	1,773	+30%
Park & Planning	907	814	- 10%

maintained sustainability of enterprise division

For the past two years, Enterprise has covered one-hundred percent of its costs, which include all operating costs, all capital improvement costs, all debt service, and all utilities for all of its facilities and programs. In FY12, the Enterprise Fund has a projected net gain of \$151,000, after covering all costs, including a portion of the debt service for the golf courses now managed by The Revenue Authority. In November, management of the Olney Manor Skate Park transferred from the Recreation Department to Montgomery Parks. After making facility improvements and restructuring admission fees to satisfy customer demand, Enterprise staff expects to cover costs fully in the first year and generate revenue in excess of costs thereafter. Enterprise also continues to introduce other new and innovative programming, including the well-attended recent "Brides on the Bus" event.



increased stewardship support for historic sites

Park staff continues to secure grants and state funding to make improvements to the historic sites in our system and keep these work efforts moving forward. Since FY 2007, staff has leveraged \$826,000 in state and/or federal aid for building restoration and interpretive signage programs. All of these projects require a one-to-one match of some kind – hard, soft, or combination. Projects using non-county funds have included the Historic Structure Report and historic preservation of the Riley House at the Josiah Henson site; audiovisual design for the Woodlawn Barn Visitors' Center; interpretive signage along the Rachel Carson Corridor; costumed, first-person interpretation at the Underground Railroad Experience Trail and Oakley Cabin; and the adaptive reuse of the Brainard Warner property in Kensington.



Staff has applied for an additional \$420,000 in state bond bills and heritage area grants to support the preservation of Poole's Store, a digitized archaeological analysis of Oakley Cabin, and continuing design/construction at Brainard Warner. The "Riley House" within the Josiah Henson Special Park has

now been officially designated on the National Register of Historic Places. Contract costs have been avoided through in-house renovation efforts on the Poole's Store property and the Darby Store. Staff anticipates the stabilization and move of the Darby Store in Beallsville to be completed this spring.

continued savings through energy management efforts

Utility costs are down \$440,000 from FY10 due to the continued implementation of our energy conservation program. This is a real success story. Parks staff recently completed energy efficient upgrades to the lighting at Olney Manor Park, and installed a new roof on our Saddlebrook office building that meets Green Building Council requirements and is anticipated to produce significant utility savings. Staff continues to pursue grant funding for such improvements. Since October, more than \$100,000 in grants has been secured to improve our energy management efforts, contributing to the millions of dollars in utility savings achieved by Montgomery Parks over the past five years.

increased revenue and support from external sources

We continue to expand opportunities for volunteerism, and volunteer hours have grown by 8% annually since FY08. Recent volunteer clean ups have produced over 180 bags of trash and 800 pounds of junk from our stream valleys and parks. Governor O'Malley joined us for a stream clean up at Turkey Branch. Since October, we have generated a total of \$133,351 in grants and donations.

expanded park offerings through partnerships

Through its public-private partnership program, Montgomery Parks has continued to work with residents and public and private partnership to provide valuable services and facilities. Construction began in March on the Miracle League Field, in partnership with the Lerner Family Foundation, the Miracle League of Montgomery County, and the Washington Nationals Dream Foundation, and the field is expected to open this July. Agreements are fully executed for the Jack Schore Community Tennis Center, also to be located in South Germantown Recreational Park, and this facility could open as early as this fall.



introduced additional community gardens sites

Five additional community garden sites are opening this spring, including three located on public school sites. The school sites include Rocking Horse Road Center in Rockville, Emory Grove Center in Gaithersburg, and Spring Mill Center in Silver Spring. Each site will contain 50 plots and be available for gardening this April.

absorbed storm-related expenses

The cost to Montgomery Parks for weather- and snow-related events from October through March was close to \$400,000. This represented hundreds of hours of staff time cleaning up snow and ice and making repairs due to damages caused by high winds, snow and other severe weather incidents. These efforts and expenses cut into our general park maintenance activities.

Cooperated with County and Regional Agencies

Montgomery Parks continues to seek opportunities to partner with our County colleagues to streamline programs and achieve efficiencies and cost-savings. A few examples are:

- Transfer of athletic field permitting to CUPF (completed December 2010)
- Collaboration with CUPF and Recreation on the creation of a single database for class registration and facility booking
- Collaboration with Recreation on Vision2030 initiative
- Assumed management of Olney Skate Park from Recreation (in November 2010)
- Contracted with the County's help desk provider to deliver help desk services more efficiently, reduce staff and achieve cost-savings
- Provided trucks and drivers to support County's ice and snow removal efforts
- Full engagement in the County Executive's CARS initiative
- Established MOU with public school system to implement cooperative community garden sites
- Worked with DGS to co-locate Parks and MCPS Maintenance Facilities at the Webb Tract



achieved additional cost-savings and efficiencies

Montgomery Parks continues to identify and act upon opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies whenever possible. Recent examples include:

- Relocated and consolidated staff from leased spaces to avoid costly leases
- Pooled administrative support for co-located divisions
- Proposed to delay capital projects with significant operating budget impacts and debt service
- Absorbed eliminated contract maintenance work
- Eliminated capital outlay funding for new equipment
- Reduced existing fleet
- Expanded energy savings program
- Employed rotating staff schedule to stretch resources over seven-day work week
- Reduced maintenance standards to reflect loss of seasonal and career staff
- Transitioned to subscription service for the Program Guide, reducing postage costs by over \$100,000
- Combined management of nature centers and Brookside Gardens within Horticulture, Forestry, and Environmental Education Division to encourage life-long stewardship values among residents. New initiatives will include Environmental Literacy, No Family Left Inside, and Naturalists in Parks.

decreased responsiveness to service requests

Montgomery Parks continues to receive comments and concerns from the public about the impact of our reduced maintenance service levels, caused by the reduction in career and seasonal staff and supplies and materials budgets. Currently, SmartParks data shows a backlog of 897 work orders for preventive and major maintenance projects. If the pattern continues and maintenance deteriorates to reactive management, regular maintenance will no longer be sufficient to sustain some of our parks and amenities.

Where we're headed

As noted in the Planning Board Chair's introductory letter, the County Executive has recommended a significant cut for M-NCPPC, representing a reduction of more than \$10 million for Montgomery Parks. The implications of a cut of this magnitude on Parks' work program would likely include further reductions in our maintenance program and canceling some popular programs.

developing cost recovery strategy for core services

Through the Vision2030 initiative, Parks staff is developing a resource allocation strategy based on an in-depth analysis of all services offered by Montgomery Parks. Among other things, this will help us identify which services should be subsidized and which should be able to recover all or a portion of their costs through fees, charges or donations, enabling us to more effectively determine the priorities for our scarce resources.

emphasizing alternative funding opportunities

In addition to continued focus on grant and bond bill funding opportunities, Park staff is months away from the launch of a formal, corporate sponsorship program which has the potential to generate significant revenue to support our operations. We have also spent the last year rebuilding the Montgomery Parks Foundation and expect to launch several fundraising efforts – including establishing a countywide "Friends" campaign and a major gifts program – within the next few months. An Executive Director has been hired for the Foundation to manage these new programs, and two new Board members have been added.



addressing the demands of new populations

The findings from the Vision2030 study are guiding our planning priorities, which include the equitable distribution of lands and facilities geographically and responding to emerging recreational trends. The upcoming Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan update will analyze needs in all areas of the County with these priorities in mind.

collaborating with county partners to achieve efficiencies and cost-savings

Montgomery Parks will continue its efforts with Recreation and CUPF to develop a single database for class registration and facility booking. We are also working closely with Recreation to finalize the Vision2030 Strategic Plan and identify action items for the short- and long-term that will improve internal processes and service delivery to residents. Coordination with CUPF continues as we work our way through issues associated with the transfer of field permitting. Best practices and lessons learned from this experience will serve to inform future work with CUPF and Recreation on the consolidated database effort.

Status of CIP and Master Plan Projects

The status of development projects and master plan schedules are contained in the charts following this section. Find more information on our development projects at www.ParkProjects.org.

Parkland Acquisitions and Dispositions

The items below are additions to the park system through land acquisitions. The net gain in parkland since the last semi-annual report is 2.83 acres.

Parkland Acquired:

1. 1.75 acres was added to Great Seneca Stream Valley Park, Unit 9
2. 5.20 acres were added to Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park, Unit 2
3. 2.73 acres were added to Ridge Road Recreational Park
4. 2.73 acres were acquired as the initial acquisition for Germantown Town Center Urban Park
5. 0.46 acres were added to Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley Park

New acquisitions totaled 12.87 acres.

Parkland Disposed of:

1. 9.29 acres were conveyed to the Board of Education out of Clarksburg Village North Local Park for a new elementary school site in the Clarksburg Village Cluster.
2. 0.75 acres, including the Park Activity Building in Garrett Park Estates Local Park, were conveyed to the Town of Garrett Park.

Land dispositions totaled 10.04 acres.



Spring 2011 Semi-Annual Report: Schedule for Major CIP Projects

PDF	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	BSY
Ballfield Initiatives (Fairland Synthetic Turf)	█						
Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge	█						
Black Hill Trail Extension	█						
Lake Needwood Modifications	█	█					
Takoma Piney Branch Local Park	█	█					
Black Hill Trail Renovation	█	█					
S. Germantown SoccerPlex (Miracle League Fields)	█	█					
Rock Creek Sewer System Improvements	█	█					
East Norbeck Local Park	█	█					
Woodstock Equestrian Center	█	█					
Darnestown Square Heritage Park	█	█					
Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park	█	█	█				
Woodlawn Barn Visitors Center	█	█	█				
Laytonia Recreational Park	█	█	█	█			
Germantown Town Center Urban Park*	█	█	█	█			
Warner Circle Special Park	█	█					
Greenbriar Local Park*	█	█	█	█			
Brookside Master Plan Implementation	█	█	█	█			
Falls Road Local Park - Parking Lot	█	█	█				
North Four Corners Local Park	█	█	█	█	█		
Rock Creek Maintenance Facility	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Magruder Branch Trail Extension			█	█	█	█	
Battery Lane Urban Park						█	█

█ Design █ Construction □ Procurement

