



Dear Councilmembers,

Our parks and green spaces are award winning examples of how local government can bring its citizens into nature to provide recreation and transformative experience, especially for its children. Many of us professionals living and working here can continue to do so only because of the proximity to green, open space and the tranquility found in our County Parkland – this is not an exaggeration! The County does a great job but it is a labor intensive and expensive endeavor, as you very well know.

As a Marylander who grew-up splashing in our creeks as a child, I know firsthand how they've changed, sometimes for the better, with respect to water quality, and sometimes for the worse, with respect to biodiversity. We have experts in our Parks department motivated to protect, conserve, and restore our biodiversity to enhance the resilience of our streams and parklands in order to survive and thrive through climate change. We must give them the tools and funding they need to do their work. The fact that our County is bordered by one of America's great rivers, the Potomac, which flows into the historic and much loved Maryland treasure, the Chesapeake Bay, demands that we provide the stewardship necessary to protect it. Montgomery County Maryland, my Maryland, must set an example for the rest of the country and protect our natural heritage. That's not an unreasonable demand, given what's at stake.

I urge you to support the Parks Department by not only maintaining, but by increasing its funding for the coming year. This is the best investment we can make.

Sincerely,

Linda Farley, Montgomery County Resident