



MONTGOMERY PARKS
F O U N D A T I O N

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Ave
Rockville, MD 20850

Subject: Testimony in Support of Restoring Funding to Montgomery Parks FY26 Budget

Dear Montgomery County Council Members,

I am writing to urge the Council to restore full funding to Montgomery Parks for the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. As Executive Director of the Montgomery Parks Foundation, I have seen firsthand the vital role our parks play in enhancing the quality of life for residents of all ages.

Montgomery Parks provides essential services that promote environmental conservation, public health, and community engagement. Our parks, trails, and recreational facilities are used daily by thousands of residents who rely on these green spaces for exercise, relaxation, and social connection. The continued success of Montgomery Parks is crucial for maintaining our county's appeal as a vibrant and healthy place to live.

Cutting funds from the Montgomery Parks budget would have detrimental effects, including reduced maintenance of facilities, fewer community programs, and limited access to safe and well-maintained recreational spaces. This would disproportionately impact families, seniors, and underserved communities who depend on these resources for physical activity, mental health benefits, and social well-being.

Furthermore, investing in our parks generates economic benefits, attracting businesses and new residents while increasing property values and tourism. The return on investment in well-maintained public spaces far exceeds the initial cost, making it a fiscally responsible decision to ensure adequate funding.

I urge the Council to prioritize the health, well-being, and environmental sustainability of Montgomery County by fully restoring funding to Montgomery Parks in the FY26 budget. Our community deserves continued access to safe, clean, and accessible parks, and your support is critical in making that a reality.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your leadership in making Montgomery County a great place to live, and I hope you will take action to protect our valuable park system.

Sincerely,

Katie Rictor
Executive Director
Montgomery Parks Foundation