

To Whom It May Concern,

The proposed budget seems to single out Montgomery County Parks to bear more than an equal burden of budget constraints. The County Executive recommended only a 3.1% increase. In contrast, other county departments received an average 7.7% increase to maintain the same level of services. This is concerning because the Parks Department only requested a 7.2% increase in the budget.

This proposed parks budget would lead to reductions to employee compensation and benefits, Insufficient funds to keep up with inflation for supplies and materials, reduced maintenance and program offerings. It would also mean no funding to maintain new and expanded parks and services. Our county parks department is beloved by the residents, it is a shining national example of a top notch park system - but it needs the budget to support those expectations.

As we saw during the Covid-19 pandemic, our parks play a pivotal role in the health and well being of our community during tough economic times. Given that we are experiencing challenging economic conditions now and in the forecast, now is not the time to cut spending on the parks department.

I am asking the county council to support our Montgomery County Parks and fully fund their budget request.

Sincerely,

Chris Irwin

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Chris Irwin.

Silver Spring MD 20902