



# **Long-Range Capital Planning in County Government Departments**

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# Long-Range Capital Planning in County Government Departments

**OLO Report 2026-3**

**Executive Summary**

**January 27, 2026**

Capital improvements are resources that provide benefits for more than one year and are relatively costly, such as roads, buildings, parks, and equipment. Long-range capital planning refers to systemwide planning for capital improvements beyond the six-year CIP. The Council requested this OLO report to better understand long-range capital planning efforts in County Government departments. Overall, OLO found that long-range capital planning can be a critical tool for ensuring the County's capital investments are data-based and racially equitable. County Government departments are in the process of developing their capacity for centering racial equity in their long-range capital planning.

## Long-Range Capital Planning in the United States

OLO examined seven examples of long-range capital plans from other jurisdictions. OLO found that most local governments do not develop separate long-range capital plans for all their government functions. Some (often jurisdictions with smaller populations) develop one long-range capital plan for all government facilities, and some develop individual plans for specific policy areas. OLO also found:

- In many cases, the reviewed jurisdictions developed long-range capital plans on a one-time basis to address specific challenges, such as aging facilities and/or rapid population growth, rather than as a regular, ongoing process;
- The levels of community engagement ranged from no engagement outside of institutional stakeholders to extensive engagement with communities in a variety of ways (e.g. surveys, community meetings, and focus groups); and
- Most plans reviewed were developed by consultants contracted by the city or county.

## Centering Racial Equity in Long-Range Capital Planning

Many jurisdictions in the United States, including Montgomery County, exhibit a pattern of racial inequities in investments in public facilities and infrastructure. As such, experts recommend centering equity in long-range planning. However, researchers find economic priorities, political considerations and environmental sustainability often take precedence over racial equity in long-range capital planning.

In one analysis of long-range urban transportation plans for 18 cities in the United States, researchers found that while many of the plans address equity in some way, "social equity goals and objectives are in many cases not translated into clearly specified objectives, and appropriate measures for assessing their achievement in a meaningful, disaggregated manner are often lacking."<sup>1</sup> To center racial equity, researchers recommend that long-range capital plans:

- Involve community members in planning;
- Examine disaggregated data for relevant groups and communities; and
- Specify clear objectives and corresponding measures that address multiple dimensions of equity.

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<sup>1</sup> K. Manaugh, M. G. Badami, A. M. El-Geneidy, "[Integrating social equity into urban transportation planning: A critical evaluation of equity objectives and measures in transportation plans in North America](#)," *Transport Policy* 37 (2015) 167–176.

## Long-Range Capital Planning in Montgomery County

Long-range capital plans in Montgomery County impact the capital budget and six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP), land use plans, and the development approval process. Executive Branch staff noted that in the absence of long-range capital plans, capital investments that are not data-based and are instead reactive to constituent advocacy may be made, potentially leading to inefficiencies and/or inequities. County Government departments currently have 12 long-range and short-range facility plans in place. Staff report that needs may exist for additional departments to develop long-range plans.

### **County Government Facility Plans in Effect as of December 2025**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Years covered</b>
Corrections	Master Facilities Confinement Study	2014	20
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Flood Management Plan Strategy (Phase 1)	2023	
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan	2025	10
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan	2022	10
Environmental Protection	MS4 Permit Financial Assurance Plan	2024	5
Fire and Rescue	2024-2030 Master Plan	2024	7
Recreation	Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030	2011	20
Transportation	Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan, 2020-2030	2021	10
Transportation	Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan	2024	12
Transportation	Ride On Reimagined Service and Implementation Plan	2024	5+
Libraries	Facilities Master Plan	2023	4
Office of County Executive	Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan	2023	7

### **Centering Racial Equity in Departments' Long-Range Capital Plans**

Land use decisions and public investments in infrastructure and facilities in Montgomery County have often benefited White people at the expense of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC). These choices have been intertwined with broader patterns of discrimination against and exploitation of BIPOC.

Facility plans developed by County departments show the County is in the process of developing its capacity for centering racial equity in long-range capital planning. Of the 12 plans developed by Montgomery County departments that OLO reviewed, the more recently developed plans were most likely to consider racial equity in substantive ways. Two of the twelve plans used some practices recommended by experts for centering racial equity specifically.

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### **OLO offers the following recommended discussion issues for Council consideration:**

1. Which departments have long-range capital planning needs and what resources are needed to develop those plans?
2. What efforts are in place in those departments to develop capacity for centering racial equity in long-range capital planning?

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## Introduction

Capital improvements are resources that provide benefits for more than one year and are relatively costly, such as roads, buildings, parks, and equipment. Long-range capital planning refers to systemwide planning for capital improvements beyond the six-year CIP.

Long-range capital planning involves projecting population growth, movement, and needs to prioritize and plan for needed public facilities in coming decades. The process of long-range planning allows a jurisdiction to proactively assess and financially plan for its future needs, including infrastructure replacement and renovation, and can help guide decision-making and next steps if infrastructure fails or unexpected collaborative opportunities arise.

**Project Scope and Report Structure.** The Council requested this OLO report to better understand long-range capital planning efforts in County Government departments. This report contains the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1, Overview of Public Facilities, Capital Budgeting Processes, and Land Use Planning and Regulation in Montgomery County**, offers background on capital improvements and related aspects of land use planning in Montgomery County;
- **Chapter 2, What is Long-Range Capital Planning?** provides an overview of long-range capital planning, including recommendations from policy experts and examples of long-range capital plans from different jurisdictions;
- **Chapter 3, Facility Plans Developed by County Government Departments**, describes short- and long-range facility plans developed by County departments that are currently in effect and observations from Executive Branch staff on long-range capital planning; and
- **Chapter 4, Findings and Discussion Issues**, presents OLO's findings and two recommended discussion issues for the Council.

**Methodology.** OLO staff members Natalia Carrizosa and Gabriela Monzon-Reynolds conducted this study with assistance from OLO staff members Leslie Rubin and Karen Pecoraro. To prepare this report, OLO gathered information through document review, literature review, and interviews with staff in County departments.

**Applying a Racial Equity and Social Justice Lens to OLO Report 2026-3.** In 2019, the County Council established the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act. This law directs County departments and offices to apply a racial equity and social justice (RESJ) lens to their work. RESJ is a process that focuses on centering the needs, leadership, and power of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC). RESJ is also a goal of eliminating racial and social inequities. To apply a RESJ lens, OLO pays attention to race, ethnicity, and other social constructs when analyzing problems, looking for solutions, and defining success. We recognize this is necessary to fulfill our mission and advance RESJ in Montgomery County. In this report, OLO applies a RESJ lens in the following ways:

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- Highlighting the history of racial inequities in capital investments in Montgomery County; and
- Describing recommended practices for centering racial equity in long-range capital plans.

**Acknowledgments.** OLO received a high level of cooperation from everyone involved in this study and appreciates the information and insights shared by all who participated, including:

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## Chapter 1. Overview of Public Facilities, Capital Budgeting Processes, and Land Use Planning and Regulation in Montgomery County

**Capital improvements** are resources that provide benefits for more than one year and are relatively costly, such as roads, buildings, parks, and equipment. The **capital budget** is the County's annual request for appropriations to fund capital improvements, also referred to as **public facilities**, throughout the County. It provides spending authority to agencies such as the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC), Montgomery County Revenue Authority (MCRA), Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) and Montgomery County Government (MCG).

The **Capital Improvements Program (CIP)** is the comprehensive presentation of capital project expenditure estimates, funding requirements, capital budget requests, and program data for the construction of all public facilities planned by County agencies over a six-year period. The Council must approve a comprehensive CIP in even-numbered calendar years and typically approves an amended CIP in odd-numbered calendar years.

The Council requested this OLO report to better understand **long-range capital planning** efforts in County Government departments, which refers to systemwide planning for capital improvements beyond the six-year CIP. This chapter offers background on capital improvements and related aspects of land use planning in Montgomery County, and is organized as follows:

- **Section A** describes County facilities and infrastructure in Montgomery County;
- **Section B** offers an overview of the County's Capital Budget and Six-Year Capital Improvements Program; and
- **Section C** provides background on land use planning and land development policies regarding public facilities.

### A. Montgomery County Public Facilities

Chapter 20 of the Montgomery County Code defines public facilities to include:<sup>2</sup>

- Public school sites and buildings and related equipment and fixtures;
- Public roads, streets, highways, bridges, and sidewalks;
- Mass transit facilities including tracks, rights-of-way, vehicles, and related buildings and structures;
- Parking lots;
- Buildings, structures, furnishings and equipment owned or used by the County including health clinics, police stations, fire and rescue stations, airports, parks, and recreational facilities;
- Housing for persons with eligible incomes;
- Water and sewer systems;
- Agricultural easements;<sup>3</sup> and
- Purchase of façade easements to implement a community revitalization project.

This report examines long-range capital planning for Montgomery County Government public facilities. It does **not** examine long-range capital planning undertaken by the following County agencies that are not part of the County Government:

- Montgomery County Public Schools;
- Montgomery College;
- Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (which includes the Montgomery County Planning Board and Planning Department);
- The Revenue Authority;
- The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County; or
- Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.

**Racial Inequities in Montgomery County Public Facilities.** Like in other policy areas, government choices regarding investments in public facilities and infrastructure in Montgomery County have often benefited White people at the expense of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC). These choices have often been intertwined with broader patterns of discrimination against and exploitation of BIPOC. The County's current General Plan, Thrive

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<sup>2</sup> Section 20-14 of Montgomery County Code

<sup>3</sup> Agricultural easements are legal agreements that restricts the use of land to protect its agricultural viability and natural resources.

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Montgomery 2050, describes these patterns as they relate to land use and public investment in facilities and infrastructure:

After the Civil War and the end of slavery, African Americans suffered from pervasive discrimination and exploitation in the provision of economic and educational opportunities, housing, health care, and basic public services. The resulting alienation led to the creation of self-reliant kinship communities in many parts of Montgomery County in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Over time, these communities suffered from a lack of public investment in infrastructure such as new roads, sewer and water, schools, health clinics, and other public amenities and services. Some communities were hurt by the urban renewal policies of the 1960s. Others faced pressure to sell their houses or farms to developers for new subdivisions.

Planning decisions and real estate development practices aggravated these injustices for most of the 20th century. Redlining and restrictive racial covenants created geographic and economic divisions that have left a legacy of injustice that not only separated people by neighborhood or community, but also barred Black Americans from building wealth (the type of wealth used to invest in higher education, start businesses, and pass to heirs). The effects of these efforts to separate people by race and class continue to be felt today.

More recently, disinvestment from and abandonment of neighborhoods previously considered highly desirable, combined with the suburbanization of poverty, have created new geographic divisions and barriers to equity and inclusion. The [1993 General Plan Refinement of the Goals & Objectives for Montgomery County's] focus on the I-270 corridor and related planning decisions exacerbated this problem by discouraging growth in East County, focusing public and private investment to the west.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [Thrive Montgomery 2050](#), Approved and Adopted, October 2022, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

### **Montgomery County Racial Equity and Social Justice Act**

Montgomery County enacted the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Act in 2019 and its amendments in 2020. Among other elements, the act requires each County department and office “to develop a racial equity and social justice action plan designed to remedy individual, institutional, and structural racism or social justice issues adversely impacting County residents.” It also requires the Planning Board to “consider the impact of (each master) plan on racial equity and social justice in the County.”<sup>5</sup> In 2022, the County Council enacted Executive Regulation 15-21 which requires each department or office to develop a RESJ action plan by 2025 that:

- Describes targets and strategies for achieving equity goals; and
- Examines historical context and data for equity issues related to each office.

## **B. Montgomery County Capital Budget and Capital Improvements Program**

The capital budget is the County’s annual request for appropriations to fund major improvements to facilities and infrastructure. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a six-year plan that presents cost estimates, funding sources, and program data for the construction of public infrastructure and facilities. Details for specific projects in the CIP are included on Project Description Forms (PDFs), which includes a description of the project, justification, data on planned expenditures and funding, and appropriations. Most projects in the CIP outline the details for the building of a specific capital project or the maintenance of existing capital infrastructure (known as Level of Effort or LOE projects).

A small number of projects in the CIP provide funding to evaluate the feasibility of potential standalone projects. Eleven facility planning projects administered by the County Government, each focused on a specific category of infrastructure (e.g., stormwater management, parking, roads, etc.), fund facility planning studies that evaluate the cost and feasibility of individual infrastructure projects with the goal of determining whether a project should become a standalone project.

The Council may amend the approved CIP at any time (with a vote of six Councilmembers). Once a project is funded in the approved CIP, departments may begin work to develop design

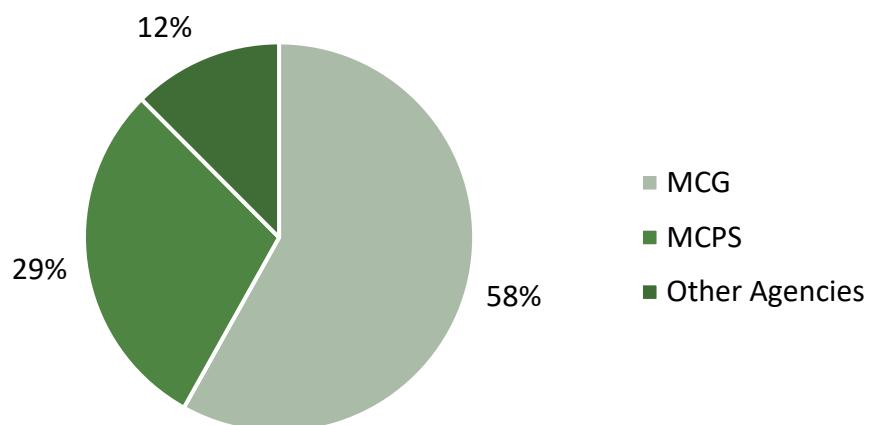
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<sup>5</sup> Bills 27-19 and 44-20, Montgomery County Racial Equity and Social Justice Act and Amendments, Montgomery County Code, November 19, 2019, and December 1, 2020; and Elaine Bonner-Tompkins, Janmarie Peña, and Elsabett Tesfaye, *OLO Report 2024-11 - RESJ Policy Handbook: Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development*, p. 11.

plans for facility construction. In practice, the County Executive submits, and the County Council approves an amended six-year CIP in odd-numbered calendar years.

The full *FY26 Approved Capital Budget and FY25-FY30 Capital Improvements Program* included \$6 billion in budgeted expenditures for FY25-FY30 (six years). Of that amount, 58% or \$3.5 billion was for projects administered by Montgomery County Government (MCG), 29% was for projects administered by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and the remaining 12% was for projects administered by other agencies.

**FY25-30 Six-Year Budgeted CIP Expenditures**



Source: FY26 CIP Approved Schedule 200 All Agency Expenditures

\* "Other agencies" refers to Montgomery College, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the Revenue Authority, and the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County.

The following table lists the total six-year budgeted expenditures and numbers of capital projects in the FY26 Approved Capital Budget and FY25-FY30 Capital Improvements Program by administering department for Montgomery County Government. It shows the Department of Transportation had, by far, the highest budgeted expenditures and number of projects.

Administering Department	Six Year Total (\$000s)	Number of Projects
Department of Transportation	\$1,863,451	144
Department of Housing and Community Affairs*	\$340,491	8
Department of Environmental Protection	\$316,441	12
Department of General Services**	\$201,519	30
Department of Recreation	\$162,973	18

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Department of Fire and Rescue Services	\$137,633	19
Department of Correction and Rehabilitation	\$92,868	5
Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions	\$91,637	10
Department of Health and Human Services	\$76,850	15
Public Libraries	\$74,778	6
Economic Development	\$54,616	9
Department of Police	\$34,678	6
Alcohol Beverage Services	\$15,511	3
Office of Agriculture	\$4,913	1

Source: OLO analysis of data provided by the Office of Management and Budget

\* The largest capital project for DHCA is Affordable Housing Acquisition and Preservation (\$287,000,000 over six years), which provides funding for the County, non-profit developers, HOC or other entities that agree to develop or redevelop property for affordable housing.

\*\* The Department of General Services administers projects that fund capital improvements for a variety of County Government facilities, many of which serve multiple departments.

**Capital Budget Equity Tool.** Starting with the FY23 CIP cycle, departments must work with the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to implement the Capital Budget Equity Tool (CBET). For each CIP, ORESJ works with OMB to select CIP projects for which departments must implement the CBET, based on projects most likely to have racial equity and social justice impacts.

The CBET is comprised of a set of questions to which departments respond. ORESJ is responsible for scoring racial equity using a structured rubric to identify projects with the most potential to reduce racial disparities and inequities in Montgomery County. ORESJ also uses the scores to identify areas where the County should mitigate unintended consequences likely to disproportionately burden BIPOC and low-income communities. ORESJ provides summary scores and their recommendations to departments and to the County Executive. In OLO Report 2024-5, OLO noted:

Facility planning is a key stage of project development when departments conduct planning and develop project scopes. It is easiest to incorporate changes to projects to respond to community needs during the facility planning stage... ORESJ staff report they have not yet been able to implement the CBET for facility planning projects due to a lack of sufficient information about the studies of specific improvements the departments complete during facility planning. Unfortunately, this prevents ORESJ from assessing racial equity during facility planning on a systematic basis.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Carrizosa, N., and DeFazio, B., *OLO Report 2024-5: Planning, Design, and Supervision in the MCG Capital Improvements Program*, Office of Legislative Oversight, Montgomery County Council, February 27, 2024, pp. 89-90

### C. Land Use Planning and Land Development Policies Regarding Public Facilities

In Montgomery County, the County Council and the Montgomery County Planning Board regulate land use and land development to advance economic, environmental and social goals. The Planning Board is composed of the Montgomery County Commissioners of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. State law grants the County Council and the Planning Board specific responsibilities with regards to land use and land development. In particular, they:

- Adopt **local zoning laws and accompanying zoning maps** that regulate the use of land, the size of lots and other open spaces, and the location and size of buildings in Montgomery County, and can include provisions to support the development of public facilities;<sup>7</sup>
- Develop and approve **land use plans**, including “area master plans” or “sector plans” that form the basis for rezoning specific sections of Montgomery County every 15 to 20 years;<sup>8</sup>
- Administer the **subdivision process**, through which developers can divide or assemble parcels of land for the purpose of sale or building and may involve requirements to build roads and other public infrastructure or reserve space for public facilities;<sup>9</sup> and
- Approve **land development applications**, which are required for many land development projects and include a review of the adequacy of public facilities.

This report examines long-range capital planning by County Government departments. This section provides context for those efforts by County Government departments. Specifically, this section summarizes the role of the County Council’s and Planning Department’s land use and development planning and regulatory activities in identifying public facility needs and supporting the development of public facilities.

Notably, much of the long-range planning for *transportation infrastructure*, including roads, pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and mass transit facilities, occurs through land use plans

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<sup>7</sup> DeFazio, B. and Rubin, L., [OLO Report 2018-11: Private Development and Public Infrastructure](#), Office of Legislative Oversight, Montgomery County Council, November 27, 2018, pp. 5-6

<sup>8</sup> Trombka, A., [OLO Report 2025-5: Street Classification and the Master Planning Process: Dynamic Policies/Static Documents](#), Office of Legislative Oversight, Montgomery County Council, March 25, 2025, pp. 4-5.

<sup>9</sup> DeFazio, B. and Rubin, L. (2018), pp. 7-8

developed by the Planning Department, adopted by the Planning Board and approved by the County Council. A comprehensive review of long-range transportation planning is beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on long-range planning efforts within County Government Departments.

### 1. Land Use Planning and County Government Public Facilities

As noted above, the Council and Planning Board are responsible for developing and approving land use plans. These include:<sup>10</sup>

- ***The General Plan***, a long-range guide for the development of the County that defines basic land use policies and context for development in the County;
- ***Area master plans or sector plans*** that form the basis for rezoning specific sections of Montgomery County every 15 to 20 years; and
- ***Functional master plans***, which address Countywide functions or systems that span more than one geographical area.

These plans guide both private and public development in Montgomery County. For example, the County's current General Plan, Thrive Montgomery 2050, includes several general recommendations regarding public facilities and public infrastructure, including (but not limited to):

- “Focus future land use and public infrastructure planning in activity centers and on growth corridors to direct development in ways that facilitate the emergence of Complete Communities.”<sup>11</sup>
- “Maximize the accessibility and utility of public facilities by locating them in places that promote integration with other public and private uses and infrastructure.”<sup>12</sup>
- “Promote active transportation improvements that prioritize walking, biking, rolling, and transit use to enhance public access to these colocated facilities, including access for seniors and those with disabilities.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Trombka, A. (2025), pp. 4-5

<sup>11</sup> Thrive Montgomery 2050, p. 73

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 88

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 88

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Area master plans and sector plans describe existing County Government public facilities in specific areas and recommend capital improvements based on input from County Government staff. The bulk of these recommendations typically pertain to transportation infrastructure but also include other types of County facilities such as public safety, recreation and human services facilities. For example, the Bethesda Downtown Plan, approved and adopted in May 2017 includes a recommendation for a new County recreation center in downtown Bethesda.<sup>14</sup>

Area master plans and sector plans can also recommend incentives for private developers to dedicate land for and/or build a public facility as part of their development project. For example, the 2025 update of the Bethesda Downtown Plan recommends allowing the Planning Board to approve additional density, reduce parking impact payments, or offer other incentives for a private developer to dedicate land for and/or build a recreation center as part of their project.<sup>15</sup> In 2025, the Council also amended the Zoning Ordinance to include these incentives.<sup>16</sup>

Functional master plans, which address Countywide functions or systems that span more than one geographical area also include recommendations regarding capital improvements, most commonly for transportation infrastructure. Recently adopted functional master plans related to transportation infrastructure include:

- Pedestrian Master Plan (2023);
- Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan (2023);
- Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan (2022);
- Bicycle Master Plan (2018);
- Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (2018);
- Purple Line Functional Plan (2010);
- Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan (2013); and
- Intercounty Connector Limited Functional Master Plan: Bikeways and Interchanges (2009)

### **1. Land Development Applications and Public Facilities<sup>17</sup>**

Montgomery County laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines establish a mechanism for planners to evaluate whether public facilities will be adequate to accommodate additional

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<sup>14</sup> [Bethesda Downtown Plan](#), Approved and Adopted May 2017, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, p. 93

<sup>15</sup> [Bethesda Downtown Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment](#), Approved and Adopted May 2025, pp. 20-21

<sup>16</sup> [Zoning Text Amendment No. 25-04](#)

<sup>17</sup> DeFazio, B. and Rubin, L. (2018), pp. 10-11

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traffic and people that proposed development projects will bring to an area. The Planning Board is charged with enforcing the County's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO), which states:

The Board may only approve a preliminary plan when it finds that public facilities will be adequate to support and service the subdivision. Public facilities and services to be examined for adequacy include roads and transportation facilities, sewer and water service, schools, police stations, firehouses, and health clinics.<sup>18</sup>

The text above references preliminary plans, which developers submit to the Planning Board for approval of a new subdivision (the division or assembly of parcels of land). In addition, various sections of the County Code also require different types of development projects to undergo an APFO determination.<sup>19</sup> Once every four years, the Council adopts guidelines for administration of the APFO.<sup>20</sup> The Council adopted the current guidelines – the 2024-2028 Growth and Infrastructure Policy – in November 2024.

The Planning Board uses two tests to determine whether adequate public facilities exist – for transportation and schools. These tests assess the adequacy of schools and transportation infrastructure in 48 “policy areas” in the County. The results of the tests determine the applicable standards for specific development applications. The Growth and Infrastructure Policy also includes general language for determining the adequacy of police, fire, health facilities, and water and sewerage facilities.

**Additional Density for Public Facilities.** The Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance allows developers to receive additional density in certain projects (which, for example, allows them to build more housing units or more retail space) in exchange for providing “public benefits” as part of the project. The Planning Board has adopted [Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines](#) to explain the standards and requirements developers must meet to obtain additional density in exchange for providing public benefits. The current guidelines describe numerous categories of public benefits, including public facilities:

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<sup>18</sup> MCC § 50-35(k). Even though this is a chapter of the County Code, Chapter 50, Subdivision of Land, commonly is referred to as the “Subdivision Regulation.”

<sup>19</sup> DeFazio, B. and Rubin, L. (2018), pp. 10-11

<sup>20</sup> MCC § 33A-15(a)(3)

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Public Facility benefits include providing space or construction for single-point facilities such as bus stops/stations, bicycle parking and storage, undergrounding transformers and utility boxes, public parking, and major facilities such as police or fire stations.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> [Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines for CR and CRT Zones](#), Montgomery County Planning Board, 2025, p. 46

# Chapter 2. What is Long-Range Capital Planning?

Chapter 1 describes Montgomery County's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), which is a six-year plan that presents cost estimates, funding sources, and program data for the planning, design and construction of public infrastructure and facilities. Chapter 1 also describes how land use plans, such as the County's General Plan and area master plans, offer recommendations for public facilities.

In this report, the phrase "long-range capital planning" refers to systemwide facility planning for the coming decades beyond the six-year CIP focused on *public* facilities and infrastructure.<sup>22</sup> This report is not limited to specific policy areas or functions but focuses on public-facing capital facilities. Long-range capital planning involves projecting population growth, movement, and needs to prioritize and plan for needed public facilities in coming decades. The process of long-range planning allows a jurisdiction to proactively assess and financially plan for its future needs, including infrastructure replacement and renovation, and can help guide decision-making and next steps if infrastructure fails or if unexpected collaborative opportunities arise.

In some cases, jurisdictions refer to these long-range capital plans as "facility master plans." In addition, in some cases, government agencies or departments have developed master plans for a government function that include both operational and capital components. The capital components of those plans are within the scope of this report.

This chapter offers an overview of long-range capital planning. It summarizes recommendations from policy experts and describes examples of long-range capital plans (sometimes called "facility master plans" or "facility plans") from different jurisdictions. It is organized as follows:

- **Section A** describes components of long-range capital plans and recommended practices; and
- **Section B** examines examples of long-range capital plans in the United States.

## A. Long-Range Capital Plan Components, Recommended Process and Racial Equity Considerations

Long-range capital plans can vary greatly by policy area. Some long-range plans address all capital assets managed by a given jurisdiction, while others are specific to particular departments or asset types. Additionally, plans vary greatly with regards to the time frame

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<sup>22</sup> As noted in Chapter 1, much of the long-range planning for transportation infrastructure, including roads, pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and mass transit facilities, occurs through land use plans developed by the Planning Department, adopted by the Planning Board and approved by the County Council. A comprehensive examination of long-range transportation planning is beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on long-range planning efforts within County Government Departments.

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being considered. While the scopes of these plans vary greatly, most include the following components:<sup>23</sup>

- Review of existing conditions, demographics, and geographical distribution of resources;
- Analysis of building needs, service needs, and shifts in community needs; and
- Recommendations for addressing deficiencies and needs.

Some plans specify existing and/or projected levels of service (LOS) for individual government functions. Examples of LOS measures include vehicle capacity of intersections or residents per recreation facility (e.g. number of residents per leisure swimming pool).

The scope of this report includes all capital assets managed by County Government departments. OLO did not identify expert recommendations for long-range capital planning that apply to all types of capital assets or policy areas. However, recommendations developed for specific asset classes offer some general guidance. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends the following process for developing and implementing systemwide parks and recreation master plans:<sup>24</sup>

1. **Internal Assessment:** Identify the vision and mission of the agency, and the plan and the necessary steps and resources to work with community and government stakeholders to develop and approve the plan.
2. **Community Engagement:** Collaborate with the community in the development and execution of the plan, including data collection, analysis and implementation.
3. **Resources & Data Collection:** Identify deficiencies in distribution, quality, safety and inclusion in facilities using geographic information systems, community engagement, audits and resource analysis. Use data to prioritize resource allocation, taking into consideration specific community needs such as physical activity and climate resiliency.
4. **Implementation:** Create an action plan that takes into consideration current and future funding resources, funding scenarios, potential partnerships, and options for closing funding gaps.

**Centering Racial Equity in Long-Range Capital Planning.** As noted in Chapter 1, policy choices regarding public facilities and infrastructure investments in Montgomery County have often benefited White people at the expense of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC). Many jurisdictions in the United States demonstrate a similar pattern of racial inequities in

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<sup>23</sup> K. Anthony, [“Closing the gap: How a facilities master plan can help your city,”](#) Smart Cities Dive, January 2021; and [https://cityoflacey.org/resource\\_library/capital-facilities-plan/](https://cityoflacey.org/resource_library/capital-facilities-plan/)

<sup>24</sup> [Creating System-Wide Master Plans](#), National Recreation and Parks Association.

investments in public facilities and infrastructure. As such, experts recommend centering equity in long-range planning. For example, the NPRA guidance states:

[D]ue to a history in our country of discriminatory practices and policies in parks, land use and development, not all people have fair and just access to parks and green spaces, recreation centers and programs. A system-wide park master plan is a tool that can help us understand the history and current challenges to park access and set a vision and plan to remove these inconsistencies and ensure parks and open space are providing the most benefit to communities. Thus, it is essential that this plan and process are grounded in community engagement, fairness and inclusion.<sup>25</sup>

However, researchers have often found that other goals and motivations, such as economic priorities, political considerations and environmental sustainability, take precedence over racial equity in long-range capital planning.<sup>26</sup> In one analysis of long-range urban transportation plans for 18 cities in the United States, researchers found that while many of the plans address equity in some way, “social equity goals and objectives are in many cases not translated into clearly specified objectives, and appropriate measures for assessing their achievement in a meaningful, disaggregated manner are often lacking.”<sup>27</sup> Based on the above findings, researchers recommend that long-range capital plans:

- Involve community members in planning to ensure that capital investments align with community needs and priorities and to foster trust with the community;<sup>28</sup>
- Examine disaggregated data for relevant groups and communities, for example looking at data stratified by income, age, gender, race and ethnicity, disability, and location;<sup>29</sup> and
- Specify clear objectives and corresponding measures that address multiple dimensions of equity.<sup>30</sup>

## B. Long-Range Capital Plan Examples

Most local governments do not develop separate long-range capital plans for all their government functions. As noted above, some (often jurisdictions with smaller populations)

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Z. Chen, D. Ki, Z. Li, K. Wang, [“Assessing equity in infrastructure investment distribution among U.S. cities,” Cities](#) 162 (2025).

<sup>27</sup> K. Manaugh, M. G. Badami, A. M. El-Geneidy, [“Integrating social equity into urban transportation planning: A critical evaluation of equity objectives and measures in transportation plans in North America,” Transport Policy](#) 37 (2015) 167–176.

<sup>28</sup> Chen, D. Ki, Z. Li, K. Wang, [“Assessing equity in infrastructure investment distribution among U.S. cities,” Cities](#) 162 (2025).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

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develop one long-range capital plan for all government facilities, and some develop individual plans for specific policy areas.

In some cases, these plans are required by applicable state laws. In addition, federal requirements regarding stormwater management involve certain elements of capital planning for local jurisdictions that discharge stormwater from their separate storm sewer systems into U.S. waters (see pages 24-25 for more details). The following table lists examples of long-range capital plans for public facing facilities. The remainder of this section summarizes each of these plans. Overall, OLO found that:

- In many cases, the reviewed jurisdictions developed long-range capital plans to address specific challenges, such as aging facilities and/or rapid population growth, rather than as a regular, ongoing process;
- The levels of community engagement ranged from no engagement outside of institutional stakeholders to extensive engagement with communities in a variety of ways (e.g. surveys, community meetings, and focus groups);
- In most cases, consultants contracted by the city or county developed the plans; and
- Long-range capital plans reviewed had some findings and recommendations that might advance racial equity but rarely did plans discuss race explicitly or offer specific recommendations to address racial inequities.

### Examples of Long-Range Capital Plans for Public Facing Capital Facilities

Plan	Jurisdiction	Year of plan	Period	Scope
<b>General Government</b>				
<a href="#">Harford County Facilities Master Plan</a>	Harford County, MD	2015	10 years	Capital only
<a href="#">Government Facilities Master Plan</a>	Lacey, WA	2023	20 years	Capital only
<b>Public Safety</b>				
<a href="#">Raleigh Fire Department Master Plan</a>	Raleigh, NC	2025	25 years	Operational & Capital
<a href="#">Berkeley Fire Department Facilities Master Plan</a>	Berkeley, CA	2023	10 years	Capital only
<b>Library</b>				
<a href="#">Next Libris Facilities Master Plan 2021-2030</a>	Washington, DC	2020	10 years	Capital only
<a href="#">Public Library Facilities Master Plan</a>	Loudoun, VA	2024	10 years	Capital only
<b>Recreation</b>				
<a href="#">Ready2Play Master Plan</a>	Washington, DC	2023	20 years	Operational & Capital

### 1. Harford County (MD) Facilities Master Plan (2015)

Harford County (population: 265,000) commissioned its Facilities Master Plan, completed in 2015, to identify priority needs for capital and operating budget purposes<sup>31</sup>. Its scope included all county departments as well as other agencies such as Harford County Public Schools and Harford Community College. The process for developing the plan included:

- An assessment of facility conditions, how facilities meet functional and operational requirements, and future needs;
- Prioritization of facilities with the most needs;
- Scenario planning for potential projects (e.g. renovation/expansion/disposal/no action); and
- Development of recommendations and implementation plan.

The process resulted in several findings, including:

- The estimated cost of bringing facility infrastructure and building systems to original level of function is significant, and many facilities are reaching the end of their lifecycle;
- Public safety and judicial facilities are not suited for their current functions;
- A need exists for satellite locations to augment a new community health care facility;
- Many programmatic functions do not have sufficient space in existing facilities;
- In several cases, multiple departments successfully use the same facility, and opportunities exist to expand this approach.
- Opportunities exist for adaptive reuse of existing facilities.

### 2. City of Lacey (WA) Government Facilities Master Plan (2023)

The City of Lacey (population: 59,000) commissioned its Government Facilities Master Plan to:<sup>32</sup>

- Describe operational needs for citywide facilities;
- Identify cost-effective approaches to meeting facility needs; and

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<sup>31</sup> Refer to [Summary Report: Harford County Master Plan](#), Jacobs Engineering Inc. (“Jacobs”) in association with DeJong Richter and Grimm+Parker Architects, Harford County, Maryland, January 2015.

<sup>32</sup> Refer to [Government Facilities Master Plan](#), MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design (MAKERS) in partnership with the City of Lacey, WA, October, 2023.

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- Support associated funding requests.

Its scope included 19 existing government facilities in the following categories:

- Public Works;
- Animal Services;
- Administration and Public Safety; and
- Parks, Culture and Recreation.

A project team comprised of city staff and three consulting firms led the planning process. The process included:

- A needs assessment based on interviews with city staff, information reviews and visual inspections of facilities;
- Two rounds of alternative analysis in collaboration with city staff; and
- Development of recommendations and an implementation plan.

Overall, the process identified seven out of 19 existing facilities as “focus facilities” with significant issues and no existing plans to address them. The findings indicate that most of these facilities require increased capacity to meet current and future needs, while one facility requires extensive renovation. The plan describes recommended capital improvements for each government function over a 20-year period.

### **3. Raleigh (NC) Fire Department Master Plan (2025)**

The City of Raleigh (population: 500,000) commissioned the Fire Department Master Plan to ensure the city can meet emergency response needs given rapid population growth and potential expansion of the geographic service area for the Raleigh Fire Department (RFD).<sup>33</sup> The process for developing the plan included:

- Workshops with staff at all levels of the RFD;
- Interviews with agencies that partner with RFD;
- Performance analysis including root cause analysis of performance gaps and benchmarking against national standards;
- Predictive modeling of population growth and call volume including the impact of service area expansion; and

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<sup>33</sup> Refer to [Raleigh Fire Department Master Plan](#), Darkhorse Emergency, in partnership with NC Fire Chief Consulting, City of Raleigh, NC, 2025.

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- Development of short-term, mid-term and long-term recommendations including a phased implementation plan and financial modeling of operational and capital costs.

Findings included:

- High workloads for RFD units (due to understaffing and limited availability of ladder trucks) and geographic coverage gaps contribute to many calls (46%) not meeting national response time standards;
- Five stations are at the end of their lifecycle and require replacement; and
- Population growth is expected to lead to a 46% increase in call volume by 2050, while geographic expansion could lead to a tripling of call volume.

### **4. City of Berkeley (CA) Fire Department Facilities Master Plan (2023)**

The City of Berkeley (population: 119,000) commissioned the Fire Department Facilities Master Plan to address the city's ten aging and outdated fire department properties and effectively meet current and future needs.<sup>34</sup> The process for developing the plan included:

- Physical inspection of fire department properties and review of relevant documents; and
- Scenario planning for renovation versus replacement of existing facilities.

The above process resulted in recommendations for:

- Renovation and expansion of three facilities;
- Onsite replacement of three facilities;
- Relocation of three facilities; and
- Remodel of one facility.

### **5. Washington, DC Next Libris Facilities Master Plan 2021-2030 (2020)**

Washington, DC (population: 702,000) developed its Facilities Master Plan for the District of Columbia Public Library System with the following goals:<sup>35</sup>

- “Manage assets wisely;”
- “Design and build responsibly;” and
- “Grow smartly and equitably.”

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<sup>34</sup> Refer to Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager to Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council, Memorandum, May 16, 2023, [Fire Department Facilities Master Plan](#).

<sup>35</sup> [Next Libris: Facilities Master Plan 2021-2030](#), DC Public Library, November 2020, p. 8

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The process for developing the plan includes:

- Assessments of facility conditions and functionality;
- Staff and community engagement including focus groups, a survey and community meetings; and
- An assessment of library usage and potential usage.

Key findings from the above process are listed below. The plan identified several specific recommendations to address the issues identified through the findings.

- District of Columbia libraries are generally in good condition, though small capital projects are needed to maintain them;
- Library square footage per population served varies across the city, with some areas having significantly less space relative to their populations than others; and
- Six geographic areas have gaps in service based on a qualitative visual analysis of maps that examined a variety of demographic factors.

In 2025, the District published an [update to the Next Libris plan](#) that offers specific recommendations to account for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically a decline in physical usage of libraries and increase in use of digital resources.

## 6. Loudoun County (VA) Public Library Facilities Master Plan (2024)

Loudoun County (population: 450,000) developed the first-ever Facilities Master Plan for Loudoun County Public Library (LCPL) to guide decision making around improvements to library facilities from FY 2025 to FY 2035.<sup>36</sup> The process for developing the plan included:

- An assessment of existing conditions at LCPL facilities;
- A review of trends in public library systems across the region; and
- Community and stakeholder engagement including three in-person meetings with the community, one virtual meeting and an online survey.

The plan's findings included:

- Five of ten libraries are undersized by more than 20% (before accounting for population growth) compared with the size-per-population recommended under Virginia standards to provide an 'essential' level of service

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<sup>36</sup> Refer to [Facilities Master Plan](#), Prepared by Grimm + Parker Architects for Loudoun County Public Library, July 15, 2024.

- Common reasons cited by survey respondents for not visiting the library included the lack of available books, a preference for reading books online, outdated facilities; and
- Survey respondents also expressed interest in improvements to the Ashburn Library and “makerspaces” in libraries that don’t currently have them.

Based on these and other findings, the plan offers specific recommendations for each library and for the county’s book vending locations.

### 7. Washington, DC Ready2Play Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2023)

Washington, DC (population: 702,000) developed the Ready2Play Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the specific goal of addressing existing inequities in the park system<sup>37</sup>. It addresses both operational and capital factors. The Ready2Play planning process included:

- Research into local demographic trends and national and international recreational trends;
- Community engagement in each ward to determine community needs, interests and priorities; and
- Development of decision-making tools including new park and facility classifications, level of service standards by amenity, and an equity framework matrix.

The plan articulates the following goals:

1. “A Unified and Equitable Park System;”
2. “Inclusive, Resilient, Sustainable Design, and Stewardship;”
3. “Responsive, Diverse Programming;” and
4. “Transparent, Efficient, Engaged Operations.”

Under each *goal*, the plan identifies multiple *strategies*, many of which include capital components. Each strategy includes specific *actions* to implement the strategy. Some of the *strategies* include:

- “Use a data-driven planning approach to target investments to meet community needs and promote equity;”
- “Seek innovative approaches and partnerships to address amenity gaps and expand recreational opportunities;”

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<sup>37</sup> Refer to [District of Columbia Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2023](#), DC Department of Parks and Recreation.

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- “Provide accessible and safe connections to and through parks and unify the park system with trails, signage, and greenways;”
- “Provide accessible, and inclusive spaces where all users feel welcome regardless of age, race, income, gender, sexual orientation, or disability status;”
- “Advance sustainability and regenerative design on DPR properties;”
- “Design spaces and buildings to be highly functional, adaptable, and resilient;” and
- “Implement natural land management, conservation, and stewardship practices.”

The plan also includes a “Capital Blueprint” that makes recommendations for specific capital improvements, future planning efforts and partnerships with the National Park Service at specific sites. The plan prioritizes census tracts and site walksheds based on the level of service analysis, demand for amenities, and based on:

- An **equity index** based on nine categories of demographic data, including race, poverty, age, disability, and violent crime; and
- A **growth index** based on the Washington Metropolitan Council of Government’s (COG) extended cooperative forecast and development pipeline data.

### **Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit**

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) is a regulatory program under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program that requires municipalities and other entities to obtain a permit to discharge stormwater from their separate storm sewer systems into U.S. waters.

The Water Quality Act (CWA) of 1972 delegates authority to state governments to administer the NPDES program, enabling them to manage permitting, administrative, and enforcement responsibilities.

There are approximately 7,250 permitted MS4s across the country, including both large and small systems operating under NPDES MS4 permits. Montgomery County receives its own MS4 Permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), which requires the County to meet specific water quality standards. This permit is renewed every five years.

**Federal and State Requirements for MS4 Permits.** CWA § 402(p) and the implementing regulations, make a distinction between Large and Medium MS4s, which are commonly referred to as “Phase I” MS4s, and Small MS4s referred to as “Phase II” MS4s. Phase I and Phase II MS4s are subject to different regulatory requirements.

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Under these regulations, a Large MS4 is defined as one serving a population of 250,000 or more based on the 1990 Census. According to the Census, Montgomery County had a total population of 757,027 in 1990 and therefore was classified as a Large MS4, falling under the Phase I category.

NPDES Phase I municipal stormwater permits require the jurisdictions to develop comprehensive programs to reduce storm drain system pollution to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). NPDES stormwater permits in Maryland require jurisdictions to:

- **Legal Authority:** provide certification from appropriate legal counsel that adequate authority exists to control discharges from the municipal storm drain system.
- **Source Identification:** map storm drain pipes and best management practices (BMPs), land use, impervious cover, and watershed restoration projects in geographical information system (GIS) format.
- **Management Programs:** implement erosion and sediment control, stormwater management, illicit connection detection and elimination, and public education and outreach programs.
- **Watershed Assessment:** evaluate all urban watersheds thoroughly regarding water quality and develop goals and action plans for restoration.
- **Restoration Projects:** restore a specific amount of uncontrolled impervious surfaces based on watershed assessments during each five-year permit cycle.
- **Assessment of Control:** document work toward meeting watershed restoration goals, including total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), using chemical, biological, and physical monitoring.
- **Program Funding:** provide an annual fiscal analysis of the capital, operation, and maintenance expenditures necessary to comply with permit conditions.

### Chapter 3. Facility Plans Developed by County Government Departments

The Council requested this OLO report to better understand long-range capital planning efforts in County Government departments. In this report, the phrase “long-range capital planning” refers to systemwide facility planning for the coming decades beyond the six-year CIP. As noted in Chapter 1, a comprehensive examination of long-range transportation planning is beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on long-range capital planning efforts within County Government departments.

Chapter 2 describes how many jurisdictions have developed long-range plans for certain types of capital facilities, including parks and recreation, libraries, and fire and rescue. OLO found that most jurisdictions do not develop long-range facility plans for each department or programmatic area. This chapter describes both short- and long-range facility plans developed by County departments that are in effect, and is organized as follows:

- **Section A** describes facility plans developed by County Government departments that are in effect; and
- **Section B** summarizes observations shared by Executive Branch staff on long-range capital planning.

As noted in Chapter 2, experts recommend centering equity by analyzing inequities in existing facilities (including the legacy of historical inequities), conducting community engagement with BIPOC communities, and including specific objectives to advance equity. OLO finds that the more recently developed plans incorporate racial equity in their analyses, including two plans that implement recommended practices for center racial equity in long-range capital planning.

Of note, the plan summaries in this chapter reflect data and analysis conducted at the time the plans were developed. Comprehensive updates to the plans or updated information about relevant capital projects fall outside the scope of this report.<sup>38</sup> **Department staff note that in many cases, conditions and/or needs have changed since the plans were developed.**

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<sup>38</sup> The County’s Capital Improvements Program (CIP) provides capital project expenditure estimates, funding requirements, capital budget requests, and program data for the construction of all public facilities planned by County agencies over a six-year period. The most recent CIP can be accessed via [Publications page of the website of the Office of Management and Budget](#).

### A. Current Facility Plans Developed by County Government Departments

This section describes the 12 facility plans developed by County departments that were in effect at the time of writing this report. It includes both short-range and long-range facility plans. Overall, this section finds that:

- Existing plans vary in their scope, including the number of years planned;
- Some plans were developed using multiple methods of community engagement, while other plans did not include community engagement in their processes; and
- More recently developed plans were most likely to consider equity in substantive ways. Of the twelve plans, two used some practices recommended by experts for specifically centering racial equity.

The following table lists the plans described in this chapter.

**County Government Facility Plans in Effect as of December 2025**

Department	Plan	Date	Years covered
Corrections	Master Facilities Confinement Study	2014	20
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Flood Management Plan Strategy (Phase 1)	2023	
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan	2025	10
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan	2022	10
Environmental Protection	MS4 Permit Financial Assurance Plan	2024	5
Fire and Rescue	2024-2030 Master Plan	2024	7
Recreation	Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030	2011	20
Transportation	Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan, 2020-2030	2021	10
Transportation	Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan	2024	12
Transportation	Ride On Reimagined Service and Implementation Plan	2024	5+
Libraries	Facilities Master Plan	2023	4
Office of County Executive	Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan	2023	7

#### 1. Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Master Facilities Confinement Study

[The Master Facilities Confinement Study Final Report](#), released in 2014, was conducted by RicciGreene Associates and Alternative Solutions Associates in collaboration with the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DOCR). The study aimed to fulfill a requirement associated with a funding request from the State of Maryland for capital projects related to the County's correctional facilities. The study included:

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- An overview of the criminal justice system in Montgomery County;
- Analyses of existing bedspace demand, inmate population projections and forecasted capacity over a 20-year period for the County's three correctional facilities;
- Analysis of system gaps and needs including the impacts of new initiatives and legislative changes; and
- A plan for capital improvements to support a request to the State for funding for a new criminal justice center.

Throughout the study, the authors worked with criminal justice system stakeholders to gather relevant documents and information. Stakeholders included representatives from:

- DOCR;
- Montgomery County Police Department;
- Sheriff's Office;
- Montgomery County Circuit Court;
- Adult Drug Court;
- District Court;
- County Council Public Safety Committee State's Attorney's Office;
- Office of the Public Defender;
- Department of Health and Human Services;
- Maryland Division of Community Supervision/North Region; and
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission.

The final report includes the following findings:

- At the time of the report, the combined capacity of the County's three correctional facilities was 1,391 beds with an average daily population of approximately 1,000.
- Projections indicated that existing capacity at the County's correctional facilities will be sufficient through 2035.<sup>39</sup> However, one facility – the Montgomery County Detention

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<sup>39</sup> At the time of writing this OLO report, DOCR reported that DOCR's average total population in Detention Services (MCDC and MCCF) has increased significantly over past four (4) years coinciding with the increase in the number of bookings and admissions, increasing in length of stay custody. The overall population has increased nearly 68%. The average number of daily bookings has increased by about 70% while length of stay has increased by over 10%.

Center – is deteriorating and was not designed to serve its current function as a central processing facility.

- There is additional need for a day reporting center to transition inmates into community supervision and for a residential mental health stabilization unit.

The report describes three proposed “Capital Improvement Plan Elements”:

- A new Criminal Justice Center for processing and housing individuals during the first 72 hours after arrest that will replace the existing Montgomery County Detention Center;
- A training center for DOCR staff at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility; and
- Improvements to the kitchen at the Pre-Release Center.

## **2. Department of Environmental Protection – Stormwater, Water Supply and Sewer, Solid Waste, and Flood Management Planning**

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) conducts planning related to stormwater management, solid waste management, and water supply and sewer systems management in compliance with federal and state requirements. In addition, DEP has developed the Comprehensive Flood Management Plan (CFMP) in collaboration with Department of Transportation (DOT), Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS), Department of Permitting Services (DPS), Office of the County Executive, Montgomery County Planning Department and Montgomery County Parks. This section describes planning under each of these four areas.

**MS4 Permit.** Chapter 2 includes information on the federal requirement for jurisdictions responsible for stormwater management to obtain and renew the MS4 Permit. As stated, the MS4 Permit requires the County, through DEP, to submit an annual fiscal analysis detailing capital expenditures, including actual expenditures for the reporting period and proposed budget for the upcoming year. This annual process documents Montgomery County’s actual and planned capital spending related to stormwater management, property management, stormwater restoration, and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) activities.<sup>40</sup>

In addition, DEP is also required to submit a Financial Assurance Plan (FAP) to Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) every two years demonstrating they will have adequate funding to meet permit requirements for impervious surface restoration. The FAP

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<sup>40</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. December 2024. [National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit. FY24 Annual Report](#).

requires five-year projections for the implementation of Montgomery County's stormwater program and BMPs necessary for meeting MS4 permit requirements.<sup>41</sup>

Some activities included in the five-year projection involve impervious surface restoration projects funded through various CIP sources, including the Water Quality Protection Charge, revenue bonds, state and federal grants, and Maryland Water Quality Revolving Loans.<sup>42</sup>

Although the MS4 permit is not itself a long-range planning tool for CIP expenditures, it guides and informs DEP's planning process. In contrast, the five-year projection included in the biennial FAP serves as a long-term planning tool by identifying funding needs and projecting expenditures over a five-year period to ensure compliance with permit requirements.

**Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.** The Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is a long-range planning tool, approved by MDE, that outlines municipal programs for the comprehensive management of solid waste generated by residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and agricultural sectors. The SWMP provides the framework for current solid waste management activities and guides the development and implementation of future programs.

Maryland State law requires DEP to develop a SWMP for the entire County, including all towns, municipal corporations, and sanitary districts. The SWMP must cover a planning period of at least ten years and describe the solid waste disposal systems, solid waste acceptance facilities, and the systematic collection and disposal of solid waste by public or private entities. The SWMP must be submitted to MDE and reviewed and updated at least once every three years.

In terms of capital planning, SWMP requires DEP to provide information on existing public or private solid waste acceptance facilities including anticipated years of service life remaining. The plan also calls for a detailed action plan that includes schedules for placing new public or private solid waste disposal systems or solid waste acceptance facilities into operation. As part of this plan, DEP must also explain how existing and proposed solid waste disposal systems will be financed, including planning and implementation.

As such, SWMP serves as a roadmap for DEP to establish a schedule and forecast the frequency with which solid waste management facilities will require maintenance and upgrades. The plan also helps DEP assess whether new facilities will need to be constructed in the future to accommodate solid waste generation and capacity.

Under current SWMP, DEP's review of existing processing facilities has identified several recommended Capital Improvement Projects focused on facility maintenance and infrastructure upgrades at the Shady Grove Processing Facility and Transfer Station, the

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<sup>41</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. December 23, 2022. [Fiscal Year 2022 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit Financial Assurance Plan](#)

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

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Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and Mixed Paper Processing Facility, and the Yard Trim Composting Facility.

**Comprehensive Flood Management Plan.** The Comprehensive Flood Management Plan (CFMP) is a multi-year effort designed to improve the County's ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from flooding. Developed in response to increased flooding events, the CFMP encompasses policy and programmatic components, as well as technical studies.

The policy and programmatic efforts evaluate the County's flood policies and programs, assessing their effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. Meanwhile, technical studies use detailed hydraulic and hydrologic modeling to characterize flood risks and vulnerabilities in selected watersheds. This information guides the identification of flood mitigation measures that the County can implement to reduce potential flooding in high-risk areas, with the implementation of individual projects carried out through the CIP.<sup>43</sup> The CFMP is being implemented in three phases:<sup>44</sup>

- **Phase 1** prioritizes watersheds for assessment and reviews existing flood response programs and policies.
- **Phase 2** studies areas that are becoming increasingly prone to flooding and implements program and policy recommendations to address these issues.
- **Phase 3** continues implementing flood mitigation measures, including Capital Improvement Projects.

Because flood management involves activities of multiple County departments, several County offices are working together to implement all phases of the CFMP. Currently, these agencies have completed Phase 1 and are progressing through Phase 2. The participating agencies have identified 17 objectives aimed at increasing the County's readiness to address flood events, one of which involves integrating flood mitigation needs into the CIP.

The CFMP supports capital planning by identifying structural improvements that can mitigate flood damage as well as demonstrate need for climate resilience and flood mitigation funding over a six-year period beginning in FY23.

The County's capital budget for fiscal year 2023 (FY23) through FY28 includes nine projects focused on improving stormwater and flood management, totaling \$34.3 million in FY23, and \$155.6 million over the 6-year period of the CIP. These projects are proposed to be funded by one or more of the following revenue sources.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. [Comprehensive Flood Management Plan](#).

<sup>44</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. May 2023. [Comprehensive Flood Management Plan: Strategy. Volume I](#).

<sup>45</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. May 2023. [Comprehensive Flood Management Plan: Attachments. Volume 3](#).

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- Current Revenue from the Water Quality Protection Charge (WQPC);
- Water Quality Protection Bonds;
- Solid Waste Management Waiver Fees;
- Federal Aid;
- State Aid; and
- Other Long-term financing.

In addition, there are four bridge projects that have a stormwater or flood management component. These projects total \$5.1 million in FY23 and \$18.7 million over the 6-year period covered by the CIP. These four projects are proposed to be funded from a combination of federal aid, General Obligation Bonds, and intergovernmental funds.<sup>46</sup>

The CFMP also includes requirements for addressing racial equity and social justice. Its strategy document is designed to guide comprehensive flood-related efforts, with a particular emphasis on community outreach to groups that have received fewer flood mitigation and recovery resources. Community engagement has included an ongoing community survey, pop-up events featuring multilingual materials, and virtual community forums. The Phase 1 strategy report notes that 75% of engagements during pop-up events were with BIPOC individuals and 60% were with Spanish speakers.<sup>47</sup>

Additionally, the goals of the Comprehensive Flood Management Plan ensure that racial equity and social justice issues are considered in every aspect of flood mitigation efforts, and the County's environmental, sustainability, and equity goals are integrated into these activities.

**Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan.** The Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan is a functional master plan for providing water and sewer services throughout Montgomery County.

Each county in Maryland is required by state law to have a comprehensive plan that addresses water supply and sewerage system needs for at least a ten-year period into the future. The Maryland Annotated Code delegates the Water and Sewer Plan authority to the counties and sets forth procedures by which counties prepare, adopt, and amend their water and sewer plans.

Sections 9-515 through 9-518 of state code provide policies specific to Montgomery County. Per these sections, the County is required to comprehensively review and update this plan once every three years.

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<sup>46</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. May 2023. [Comprehensive Flood Management Plan: Attachments. Volume 3](#).

<sup>47</sup> Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. May 2023. [Comprehensive Flood Management Plan: Strategy. Volume I](#).

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The County Executive, acting through DEP, prepares the plan's comprehensive updates and provides recommendations to the Council on proposed amendments. Under state law, the County Council is responsible for approving the plan and its amendments.

The plan provides the framework to review and implement Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission's (WSSC) CIP, including decisions about when projects occur and how they are funded. It seeks to achieve this purpose by:

- Outlining planning principles and policies related to land use planning, infrastructure development, public health and environmental protection;
- Describing current conditions of the water supply and sewerage systems, including system condition, capacity, availability and related issues;
- Identifying and prioritizing community needs for improved water supply and sewerage infrastructure; and
- Identifying planning and infrastructure projects needed to address existing or projected needs.

WSSC submits an annual operating budget and a six-year CIP to the County for review and approval by the County Council, this includes major water and sewer projects. Once approved, the County incorporates WSSC's CIP and any amendments to the Water and Sewer Plan, which helps meet state fiscal planning requirements. WSSC then carries out the County approved CIP by designing, building, operating, and maintaining water and sewer facilities and acquiring needed sites and rights-of-way.

The plan supports long-range capital planning by providing a framework for identifying, funding, and implementing major water and sewer projects over several years. It helps the County anticipate future infrastructure needs, align projects with growth, and ensure that resources are available when needed.

The plan does not directly include racial equity or social justice components. However, revisions to the Thrive Montgomery 2050 plan may influence water and sewer policies, which could require incorporating RESJ considerations into the plan. This is especially relevant for financing the cost of extensions in unserved and underserved neighborhoods, including the proposal to create extension subdistricts and subsidy mechanisms to make sewer extensions more affordable.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Levchenko, Keith. September 2022. [Briefing/Discussion: Ten-Year Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan 2022-2031](#)

### 3. Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service 2024-2030 Master Plan

The County Code requires the Montgomery County Fire Chief to draft a master plan for fire, rescue and emergency medical services and submit it to the County Executive, who must forward it and/or any amendments to the County Council for approval.<sup>49</sup> The plan must examine existing personnel and resources, the effectiveness of fire and building codes, an analysis of short- and long-term needs, and a plan for addressing those needs that includes cost estimates.

The 2024-2030 Master Plan does not include recommendations for capital improvements. It states, “MCFRS envisions increased demand for services in the future, but we do not believe that demand will necessarily require capital-intensive projects to address.” More specifically, the plan notes:

MCFRS provides services from 37 fire and rescue stations and 10 other facilities including Public Safety Headquarters, the Fire-Rescue Training Academy, the Central Maintenance Facility, the Community Services Building, the Emergency Communications Center, the 13 alternate Emergency Communications Center, the Fire and Explosives Investigations annex, the Mental Health Suite, the Fire/Rescue Occupational Medical Section, and the Dover Road Warehouse (see Appendix B). Although the 2016-22 Master Plan outlined a need for four new fire/rescue stations, fiscal constraints have limited the department in this capacity, and planners have been unable to identify suitable locations. Moreover, many of our existing stations are aged, and becoming physically and functionally obsolete. Financial resources will be needed to address these updates as they are identified in the capital improvements program (CIP) process.

The plan also includes maps illustrating risks for eight different types of hazards in each of the County’s census tracts. These maps are based on a methodology outlined in a 2022 MCFRS document, [Evaluating Risk in Montgomery County](#). This document highlights a need to consider community resilience as the inverse of risk, and that community resilience is closely tied to racial equity. The document includes analysis by census tract that incorporates community demographics as a data point for assessing community resilience. However, the 2024-2030 Master Plan emphasizes that MCFRS has a need to further develop its capacity for advancing racial equity.

MCFRS is firmly committed to adopting, advancing, and perfecting the racial equity and social justice framework expressed by the ORESJ. Over the last two years, MCFRS has begun work in this space; however, our understanding of the meaning and operationalization of advancing racial equity is in its nascent stages. Development of this capacity is a priority.

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<sup>49</sup> Montgomery County Code Sec. 21-12

### 4. Montgomery County Public Libraries – Facilities Master Plan

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) commissioned its Facilities Master Plan in collaboration with the Department of General Services to identify current facility needs and offer recommendations to address those needs for FY23-FY26. The process included direct observation of facilities as well as research and data collection based on each library's geographical service area, collections, staffing and facility characteristics. This plan builds on a previous facility plan that envisioned library facilities as "community connection hubs," and asserts that:

This supports a fundamental mission of libraries - to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in communities and to inspire and inform. Library facilities are constantly evolving, forcing them to rethink and reimagine their interior spaces to meet the demands of the communities. MCPL realizes that communities change, and existing facilities require consistent preventative maintenance and a targeted program for replacement of major equipment and building systems to ensure they remain clean, safe, in compliance with local building codes, and usable by the public and staff.<sup>50</sup>

The plan offers a description of each facility and information regarding current construction activity at each location. It outlines five different potential types of capital projects to improve library facilities ranging from limited refurbishment to new construction and notes that determining the right approach for each facility will require a more comprehensive assessment. To provide additional context for MCPL's Facilities Master Plan, the text in the box below describes MCPL's Strategic Plan FY2023-FY2026.

#### MCPL's Strategic Plan FY2023-FY2026

In the wake of the disruptions and innovations that occurred during COVID-19 pandemic, MCPL identified a need to develop a vision for the libraries to ensure MCPL is responsive to the needs of County residents. MCPL worked with the Montgomery County Innovation Team to engage in a visioning process that included:

- Inviting MCPL staff to complete a "destination postcard" describing their vision for MCPL;
- Opportunities for residents to provide input on vision boards, in focus groups and through an online survey; and
- Workshops with all MCPL branches and staff to review feedback and identify ways to address identified needs.

The plan identifies the following mission and vision for MCPL:

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<sup>50</sup> P. 4

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- **Vision:** Montgomery County Public Libraries are an essential component of a just and equitable community, where all can thrive and grow; and
- **Mission:** We provide equitable access to information, ideas, and experiences that spark imagination and expand possibilities for all.

The plan also identified the following goals:

1. Children five and under are ready for kindergarten;
2. Teens are ready for college and/or the workforce, and to be lifelong users of the library;
3. Speakers of languages other than English can participate fully in American society;
4. Residents with limited access to technology and/or the internet can navigate a digital world to get what they need.

For each goal, the plan articulates actions and outputs needed to achieve the goal, with a focus on the County's Equity Focus Areas. These actions and outputs are primarily operational in nature and do not identify specific capital improvement needs.

### **5. Recreation Department – Vision2030 and the Recreation Facility Development Plan 2010-2030**

The Montgomery County Recreation Department's (MCRD) [Recreation Facility Development Plan 2010-2030](#), finalized in 2011, is the department's current facility plan. Previous facility plans for recreation facilities include:

- Master Plan for Aquatic Facilities and Recreation Complexes, 1974;
- Recreation Facility Recommendations, 1988; and
- Recreation Facility Development Plan, 1997 – 2010.

The Recreation Facility Development Plan 2010-2030 draws its recommendations from analysis and stakeholder engagement conducted as part of the [Vision2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation](#), developed jointly by the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks, Montgomery County and the County Department of Recreation. Because these two documents are closely interrelated, this section discusses both.

**Vision2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation Overview.** In 2011, the M-NCPPC Department of Parks, Montgomery County and MCRD finalized their strategic plan aimed at guiding “the stewardship of natural and historic resources” and the provision of “opportunities for active life-long learning, leisure, and recreation” in Montgomery County. The plan presents recommendations based on public engagement (including public meetings, focus groups, and a

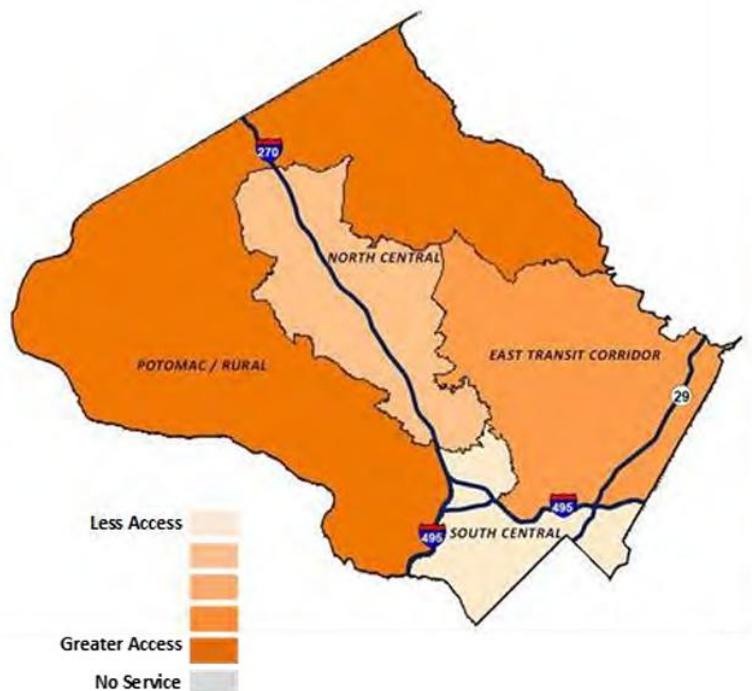
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Countywide mail survey), a level of service analysis, and population projections developed by the Planning Department.

The exhibit below from the Vision2030 Strategic Plan shows the level of service per population by sub-area, comparing existing County parks and recreation facilities to the 2010 level of service analysis. The measure used for comparison is the Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process (GRASP)® score, which uses a proprietary methodology to evaluate access to and the quality of facilities within a given area. In this case, the scores are normalized by population density.

**Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Level of Service Per Population By Sub-Area, 2010**



Source: Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation in Montgomery County, MD, Executive Summary, June 2011

This analysis found that, for all parks and recreation facilities, the Potomac/Rural sub-area had the highest level of service per capita, while the South Central sub-area had the lowest. The analysis also showed the North Central sub-area was projected to have the most population growth by 2030, followed by the South Central sub-area.

Vision2030 included a level of service analysis for recreation facilities specifically. This analysis, along with the survey, resulted in the following findings:

- **Indoor aquatics.** Montgomery County had a larger ratio of population per indoor aquatic facility (which implies a *lower* level of service) compared to national benchmarks, though it is noted the County aquatic centers are larger than those in most other jurisdictions. Survey

respondents ranked the need for additions, expansion or improvement of indoor aquatic facilities higher than for outdoor aquatic facilities.

- **Outdoor aquatics.** Similar to indoor aquatics, Montgomery County has a higher population per outdoor aquatics facility (a *lower* level of service) compared with national benchmarks. The analysis notes when considering “alternative providers” (e.g. private swimming clubs), “The County appears to be well-served with outdoor pools.”

The plan includes the following goal regarding recreation facilities: “Provide an equitable distribution of public indoor recreation spaces in Montgomery County that is sustainable.” Specifically, this goal recommends consolidation of County recreation and indoor aquatics facilities and their colocation with schools, libraries, park facilities, and other service providers. Of note, the report highlights the need to prioritize public indoor recreation centers in the North Central and South Central sub-areas.

**Recreation Facility Development Plan 2010-2030 Overview.** In alignment with the Vision2030 Strategic Plan, the Recreation Facility Development Plan 2010-2030, “envisions much larger regional-serving facilities placed strategically in population centers with excellent access to a variety of public transportation systems.” This recommendation represents a shift away from the County’s previous approach to build smaller community recreation facilities in more locations. Instead, this plan recommends building regional multipurpose recreation centers that include indoor aquatics. The plan identifies numerous benefits to the recommended approach, including reduced costs and alignment with national trends and smart growth goals. At the same time, the plan suggests that renovating and modernizing existing, smaller community recreation centers is an additional strategy for meeting demand.

The plan proposed developing a new Program of Requirements (POR) for combined community center and aquatic projects. A POR is one of the first steps in facility planning for potential capital projects and describes the structural and functional requirements of a proposed facility. Finally, the plan identified four potential locations for combined community recreation and aquatic centers to address the needs identified by the Vision2030 level of service analysis and survey:

1. Silver Spring;
2. White Flint;
3. Shady Grove; and
4. Clarksburg.

## 6. Department of Transportation – Ride On System Planning

As noted in Chapter 1, much of the long-range planning for *transportation infrastructure*, including roads, pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and mass transit facilities occurs through land

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use plans developed by the Planning Department, adopted by the Planning Board and approved by the County Council. A comprehensive review of long-range transportation planning is beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on long-range planning efforts within County Government departments for capital needs. However, staff report that within the department they undertake long-range planning for:

- Ongoing system preservation; and
- The Ride On Bus system, addressing both capital and operational components.

The following systemwide long-range planning programs for system preservation are ongoing in DOT and are not associated with published reports:

- Pavement Management Program;
- Bridge Inventory and Bridge Inspection Program; and
- Sidewalk Inventory.

DOT also conducts specific (not systemwide) long-range planning for parking facilities and parking demand in the County's Parking Lot Districts through its parking demand studies and individual parking facility assessments. Finally, DOT has three current long-range plans pertaining to the Ride On Bus system, summarized in this section:

- [Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan, 2020-2030](#) (2021)
- [Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan](#) (2024)
- [Ride On Reimagined: Montgomery County's Comprehensive Bus Network Study Service and Implementation Plan](#) (2024)

These plans follow several related previous studies including:

- Montgomery County Strategic Transit Plan (2004)
- North County Maintenance Depot Study (2008)
- Bus Fleet Management Plan (2014)
- Montgomery County Maintenance Strategic Plan (2017)
- Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan (2017)

**Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan, 2020-2030.** The Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan, 2020-2030 offers information about current Ride On operations, existing Ride On bus fleet and maintenance facilities, current and projected ridership, and planned operational changes that will impact bus fleet needs. Key findings and recommendations from this plan include:

- Over the past decade, Ride On ridership has declined, which is consistent with other transit systems in the region.

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- The decline in ridership is attributed to low gasoline prices, decline in federal employment and government shutdowns, increased telecommuting and Metrorail service problems.
- Montgomery County's population is aging, which will likely result in continued ridership declines.
- Each of the County's "traffic analysis zones," which are geographic areas that have a density of more than three households per acre, has transit services covering all or part of the zone.
- Peak vehicle requirements (the number of buses needed to operate the system at maximum capacity) are expected to increase from 379 in 2020 to 484 in 2030 (a 28% increase), and the increase is primarily due to new Flash (Bus Rapid Transit), Ride On extra (limited stop), and Flex (on demand) bus services.
- Zero emission buses (electric buses or ZEBs) have significantly higher capital costs than traditional buses and result in relatively small operating cost savings and emissions reductions.
- Expanding transit services is considered the County's most effective strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, followed by energy improvements to maintenance facilities and replacement of existing buses with ZEBs.
- Acquisition of 55 ZEBs was planned by 2024, and a ZEB implementation study was recommended.
- The County currently owns two Ride On Bus maintenance facilities and leases a third facility, with a combined capacity for 417 buses.
- The renovation of one of two County-owned maintenance facilities and construction of a new facility is recommended to provide for sufficient transit maintenance capacity in the future.

**Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan.** The Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Transition Plan offers recommendations for meeting the County's goal of achieving a 100% transition to ZEBs by 2035. The plan states:

The release of this ZEB Transition Plan represents a snapshot in time, and its development is based on both the County's completed and ongoing zero-emission fleet and facility projects, as well as the capabilities of the current zero-emission technologies

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available; this document will be continually updated over time as conditions evolve and new decisions are made that further define the path forward. Achieving this goal will require alignment of external technology functions, internal adaptation, and available financial resources.

The plan includes the following findings:

- The gross cost of transition to ZEBs from 2024 to 2035 is estimated to be \$2.36 billion, which is \$700 million higher than the baseline of procuring conventionally fueled buses.
- The goal of achieving a 100% transition to ZEBs by 2035 is achievable based on the fleet's current age, replacement schedule, and assuming the plan is fully funded.
- Public-private partnerships (P3s) offer a predictable cost schedule and reduce the risks borne by the County.
- The County plans to procure ZEBs multiple years in advance to ensure that targets can be met given the contraction in domestic bus production capacity among bus manufacturers.
- Because of high mileage required per bus, the County's ZEBs will require high energy capacity ZEB technology and/or using on-route bus chargers.
- Because ZEB technology is rapidly evolving, the County should consider a contingency fleet of conventionally fueled vehicles that can offer range and flexibility while ZEB technologies continue to be developed.

The plan includes recommendations to continue to acquire Battery Electric Buses under the County's current contract with GILLIG LLC, a bus manufacturer, and to monitor the performance of the County's first fleet of Fuel Cell Electric Buses. It also calls for:

- Expanding ZEB infrastructure capacity at the Brookville Maintenance Depot to achieve 100% ZEB capacity at that depot;
- Increasing ZEP capacity including hydrogen infrastructure at other locations as well; and
- Evaluating on-route charging as an additional option.

**Ride On Reimagined Service and Implementation Plan.** Ride On Reimagined refers to a two-year study of Ride On and Metrobus service in Montgomery County. The Service and Implementation Plan was released in 2024. The study examined existing market conditions, transit use, and public feedback in concert with a similar process by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), to redesign bus transit services. The study process included a customer survey, focus groups with Ride On riders and non-riders in

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different areas of the County, meetings with bus operators, and public input on draft changes to the existing bus network. It also included an analysis of impacts of the proposed changes to populations protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including:

- Persons who identify as being American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander; and
- Persons in households with incomes that fall below the Federal Poverty Level.

The following summarizes selected study findings.

- The existing conditions review found several opportunities for increased bus service both within and between specific areas of the County.
- The customer service survey found 40% of bus riders do not have a vehicle they can reliably use, and commuting to work is the most common reason why people take the bus.
- The survey and focus groups showed (1) needs for more frequent bus service, which was preferred over shorter walks to the bus stop, and for bus trips that do not involve transfers, and (2) a demand for bus service to places where people engage in recreation such as parks, museums and cultural institutions.
- The Title VI analysis found no potential disparate or disproportionate impacts of the proposed bus network changes by race, ethnicity or household income.
- The lack of available small zero emission buses (ZEBs) on the market that have long range fuel cell battery technology means the County will need to procure a larger number of buses to operate certain shorter routes, such as Flex (on-demand) services.
- The proposed changes will increase the use of certain bus terminals and decrease the use of others; therefore capacity needs at bus terminals will need to be monitored.

The Service and Implementation proposed the following elements of a redesigned bus network:

- A network of fast and frequent bus routes that includes eight new bus rapid transit (BRT) lines and four new high-capacity Ride On extRa lines;
- The expansion of bus service coverage through 19 new Ride On Flex (on demand) zones and hybrid fixed/on demand zones;
- New cross-county connections on bus routes;

- Increased weekday frequencies on 30 routes and increased weekend frequencies on 38 routes; and
- New weekend service on 26 bus routes.

### 7. Office of the County Executive – Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan

Vision Zero is a multi-agency initiative with majority of action items led by the Office of the County Executive, the Department of Transportation, and the Police Department. It is aimed at eliminating all traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries in the county by the year 2030. The Montgomery County Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan describes 45 action items organized under the following three pillars:

1. **Complete Streets:** Creating streets with frequent and protected crossings, space for pedestrians, individuals using assistive mobility devices, and cyclists, and roadway features to promote safe speeds for vehicles.
2. **Multimodal Future:** Designing, constructing and operating transit, pedestrian and bikeway facilities to avoid or remove safety hazards.
3. **Culture of Safety:** Reducing risky behaviors, such as speeding and impaired driving, and increasing protective behaviors, such as wearing seatbelts and driving vehicles with higher safety ratings.

The first two categories, Complete Streets and Multimodal Future, include numerous action items involving capital improvements. For each action item, the document includes several ratings including:

- Crash Reduction Factor;
- Accessibility Impact for people with disabilities;
- Racial Equity and Social Justice; and
- New Investment Estimate.

The report includes data on emergency room visits for motor vehicle crashes. Black or African American residents had an emergency room admission rate for motor vehicle crashes 136% higher than Asian/ Pacific Islander residents and 104% higher than White, Non-Hispanic residents. Latinx residents had the second highest rate of emergency room admissions for motor vehicle crashes. Crash data show that eight of 10 census tracts experiencing the highest density of serious and fatal crashes were in Equity Emphasis Areas, or neighborhoods with large percentages of BIPOC and/or people with lower incomes.

The report highlights the location of BIPOC communities and communities with higher rates of poverty near the County's busiest highways. This is due to a legacy of racist planning, housing, and transportation policies and investments. The report includes recommendations to expand two-way community engagement with “underserved” neighborhoods through the community ambassador program and Safe Routes to School.

### **B. Observations from Executive Branch Staff on Long-Range Capital Planning**

OLO interviewed staff from the departments with and without written facility plans. OLO heard the following observations from Executive Branch staff:

- In the absence of a long-range capital plan, capital investments for public facing facilities may be made that are not data-based and are instead reactive to constituent advocacy, which can lead to inefficiencies and/or inequities;
- Long-range capital plans developed by County departments have been helpful for communicating with the Planning Department during the development of land use plans, such as area master plans;
- The use of consultants to develop a facility plan can be helpful in many cases, especially where departments lack staff capacity for capital planning and/or where specialized expertise in a specific type of capital asset is needed;
- Staff note that long-range capital plans require flexibility to allow for changing conditions and opportunities that arise;
- In some departments without long-range capital plans in place, staff note that long-range capital planning would be beneficial to strategically plan for the future and prepare for eventual failure of existing capital assets; and
- Some staff suggested long-range capital planning is less helpful when factors outside the department’s control drive capital investments, or when significant capital needs are not anticipated in the coming decade(s).

## Chapter 4. OLO Findings and Discussion Issues

The County Council requested this Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) report to gather information on long range capital planning in County Government departments. **Section A** of this chapter presents OLO’s findings, and **Section B** presents OLO’s two recommended discussion issues for the Council.

### A. Findings

This section presents OLO’s findings on long-range capital planning recommended practices and facility plans developed by County Government departments.

**Finding #1. In the United States, many local governments develop long-range capital plans to address specific needs that arise, but most do not regularly develop individual capital plans for each of their government functions.**

In this report, the phrase “long-range capital planning” refers to systemwide facility planning for the coming decades beyond the six-year CIP and is focused on *public* facilities and infrastructure.<sup>51</sup> This report is not limited to specific policy areas or functions, but focuses on public-facing capital facilities.

Long-range capital planning involves projecting population growth, movement, and needs to prioritize and plan for needed public facilities in coming decades. The process of long-range planning allows a jurisdiction to proactively assess and financially plan for its future needs, including infrastructure replacement and renovation, and can help guide decision-making and next steps if infrastructure fails or if unexpected collaborative opportunities arise.

OLO examined seven examples of long-range capital plans from other jurisdictions. OLO found that most local governments do not develop separate long-range capital plans for all their government functions. Some (often jurisdictions with smaller populations) develop one long-range capital plan for all government facilities, and some develop individual plans for specific policy areas. OLO also found:

- In many cases, the reviewed jurisdictions developed long-range capital plans on a one-time basis to address specific challenges, such as aging facilities and/or rapid population growth, rather than as a regular, ongoing process;

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<sup>51</sup> As noted in Chapter 1, much of the long-range planning for transportation infrastructure, including roads, pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and mass transit facilities, occurs through land use plans developed by the Planning Department, adopted by the Planning Board and approved by the County Council. A comprehensive examination of long-range transportation planning is beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on long-range planning efforts within County Government departments.

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- The levels of community engagement ranged from no engagement outside of institutional stakeholders to extensive engagement with communities in a variety of ways (e.g. surveys, community meetings, and focus groups); and
- Most plans reviewed were developed by consultants contracted by the city or county.

**Finding #2. Researchers recommend centering equity in long-range capital planning, but find most plans do not center racial equity in a meaningful way.**

Many jurisdictions in the United States, including Montgomery County, demonstrate a pattern of racial inequities in investments in public facilities and infrastructure. As such, experts recommend centering equity in long-range planning. However, researchers have often found that other goals and motivations, such as economic priorities, political considerations and environmental sustainability, take precedence over racial equity in long-range capital planning. Researchers recommend that long-range capital plans:

- Involve community members in planning to ensure capital investments align with community needs and priorities as well as foster trust with the community;<sup>52</sup>
- Examine disaggregated data for relevant groups and communities, for example looking at data stratified by income, age, gender, race and ethnicity, disability, and location;<sup>53</sup> and
- Specify clear objectives and corresponding measures that address multiple dimensions of equity.<sup>54</sup>

**Finding #3. Long-range capital plans can have significant impacts on public investments in infrastructure and facilities.**

Long-range capital plans in Montgomery County impact the capital budget and six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP), land use plans, and the development approval process. Specifically, long-range capital plans identify capital needs and offer recommendations that may generate:

- Standalone projects for capital improvements and facility planning studies;

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<sup>52</sup> Chen, D. Ki, Z. Li, K. Wang, ["Assessing equity in infrastructure investment distribution among U.S. cities,"](#) *Cities* 162 (2025).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

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- Recommendations in land use plans, including area master plans or sector plans that form the basis for rezoning specific sections of Montgomery County every 15 to 20 years;
- Development approval decisions that grant developers additional density in exchange for providing space for and/or constructing public facilities.

Executive Branch staff noted in the absence of long-range capital plans, capital investments that are not data-based and are instead reactive to constituent advocacy may be made, potentially leading to inefficiencies and/or inequities. They also highlighted that plans developed by County departments have been helpful for communicating with the Planning Department during the development of land use plans.

**Finding #4. Land use decisions and public investments in infrastructure and facilities in Montgomery County have often benefited White people at the expense of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC).**

Like in other policy areas, government choices regarding investments in public facilities and infrastructure in Montgomery County have often benefited White people at the expense of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC). These choices have often been intertwined with broader patterns of discrimination against and exploitation of BIPOC. The County's current General Plan, Thrive Montgomery 2050, describes the following historical racial inequities relating to land use and public investment in facilities and infrastructure:

- Lack of public investment in roads, sewer and water, schools, health clinics and other infrastructure serving African American communities in Montgomery County created after the Civil War;
- Twentieth century planning decisions and real estate development practices that excluded Black Americans from communities and prevented them from building wealth;
- Urban renewal policies in the 1960s that harmed local African American communities; and
- The focus of the County's 1993 General Plan Refinement on the I-270 corridor that discouraged growth in east County and focused public and private investment to the west.

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**Finding #5. County Government departments currently have 12 long-range and short-range facility plans in place. Needs may exist for additional departments to develop long-range plans.**

The table below lists long- and short-range facility plans currently in effect that were developed by County departments. In reviewing these plans, OLO found that:

- Existing plans vary in their scope, including the number of years planned;
- Some plans were developed using multiple methods of community engagement, while other plans did not include community engagement in their processes;
- In some departments without long-range capital plans in place, staff noted that long-range capital planning would be beneficial or necessary; and
- On the other hand, some staff suggested long-range capital planning is less helpful when factors outside the department's control drive capital investments, or when significant capital needs are not anticipated in the coming decade(s).

### County Government Facility Plans in Effect as of December 2025

Department	Plan	Date	Years covered
Corrections	Master Facilities Confinement Study	2014	20
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Flood Management Plan Strategy (Phase 1)	2023	
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan	2025	10
Environmental Protection	Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan	2022	10
Environmental Protection	MS4 Permit Financial Assurance Plan	2024	5
Fire and Rescue	2024-2030 Master Plan	2024	7
Recreation	Recreation Facility Development Plan, 2010-2030	2011	20
Transportation	Ride On Bus Fleet Management Plan, 2020-2030	2021	10
Transportation	Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan	2024	12
Transportation	Ride On Reimagined Service and Implementation Plan	2024	5+
Libraries	Facilities Master Plan	2023	4
Office of County Executive	Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan	2023	7

**Finding #6. Facility plans developed by County departments show that the County is in the process of developing its capacity for centering racial equity in long-range capital planning.**

Most plans reviewed by OLO did not explicitly address racial equity. Of the 12 plans developed by Montgomery County departments that OLO reviewed, the more recently developed plans

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were the most likely to consider racial equity in substantive ways. Two of the twelve plans used some practices recommended by experts for centering racial equity specifically. Specifically, OLO identified recommended practices for advancing racial equity in:

- DEP's Comprehensive Flood Management Plan Strategy (Phase 1); and
- Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan

These plans documented community engagement with BIPOC communities, examined data disaggregated by race and other demographic categories, and included objectives that specifically addressed equity.

## **B. Recommended Discussion Issues**

OLO offers two discussion issues for Council consideration. The Council may wish to discuss with Executive Branch representatives the following issues:

1. Which departments have long-range capital planning needs and what resources are needed to develop those plans?
2. What efforts are in place in those departments to develop capacity for centering racial equity in long-range capital planning?