




OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

## MEMORANDUM

January 15, 2019

TO: Nancy Navarro, President, Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive 

SUBJECT: Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)  
FY20-25 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and FY20 CIP Expenditures

I am pleased to transmit to you, in accordance with State law, my recommended FY20-25 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and FY20 CIP expenditures for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

WSSC's Proposed FY20-25 CIP totals \$1.873 billion, of which \$1.537 billion is for Montgomery County and bi-county projects. The latter figure represents a \$87 million (5.3%) decrease from the six-year total for Montgomery County and bi-county projects in the Commission's approved FY19-24 CIP. The majority of this net decrease (\$81 million) is due to the deferral of the Potomac Submerged Channel Intake project beyond the six-year period.

### Spending Control Limits

The previous County Executive recommended, and the Council adopted FY20 Spending Control Limits for WSSC that include a maximum average water and sewer rate increase of 5.0 percent, which is 0.5 percentage points higher than the 4.5 percent average rate increase approved for FY19.

Under the 5.0 percent rate increase allowed by the Council adopted Spending Control Limits, WSSC will have to make \$10.8 million of unspecified reductions to its operating budget. Such reductions could potentially impact capital spending. I strongly urge the Commission to ensure that the following essential programs are preserved when deciding on reductions:

- The reconstruction and rehabilitation of WSSC's aging small diameter water and sewer mains;
- The continuation of the large valve replacement program; and
- Other critical infrastructure repairs associated with our aging water and sewer system.

These initiatives, which are critical to the rehabilitation and renewal of WSSC's aging infrastructure, must proceed as planned.

## **Reconstruction of Small Water and Sewer Mains**

The Commission continues to uphold a responsible and robust infrastructure repair program in the FY20-25 CIP. WSSC is proposing to temporarily decrease the number of miles of water main replacement from 45 to 25 in order to pilot better technologies for leak detection. I feel this temporary reduction can be accommodated and will allow future replacement efforts to be better targeted. WSSC will maintain its sewer main replacement level of effort at 20 miles in FY20.

## **New Projects**

I support the three new CIP projects entering the Montgomery and bi-county program this year:

- Two sewer projects, Damascus Town Center WWPS Replacement and Spring Gardens WWPS Replacement, which will replace and increase the capacity of wastewater pumping stations servicing the Damascus and Spring Gardens areas.
- One water project, White Oak Water Mains Augmentation, which will upsize an existing water main to serve planned development in the White Oak area. This project is developer funded through the System Development Charge.

## **Potomac Water Filtration Plant Consent Decree**

While I am not recommending adjustments to proposed CIP projects at this time, I wanted to note my concern with the high cost of the Potomac Water Filtration Plant Consent Decree project. I encourage WSSC to work with the County's Department of Environmental Protection, and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and environmental advocates to ensure that long-term capital upgrades to meet the consent decree's requirements are environmentally beneficial and fiscally prudent.

## **Blue Plains Projects**

I am not proposing any changes to the Blue Plains projects since DC Water has not issued revised project estimates. If and when new project estimates become available, I will communicate a recommendation later in the budget process.

I understand that WSSC may continue to examine adjustments to the CIP program as the operating budget is developed. I encourage the Commission to continue to prioritize critical infrastructure projects and to strike a balance between making the investments to ensure the long-term stability of our utility infrastructure and the impact on ratepayers.

As always, Executive Branch staff are available to assist you in your deliberations. I look forward to discussing with you any policy matters or major resource allocation issues that arise this spring.

ME:trl

Nancy Navarro, President  
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cc: County Councilmembers  
Andrew Kleine, Chief Administrative Officer  
Carla A. Reid, General Manager/CEO, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission  
Patricia Colihan, Chief Financial Officer, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission  
Marlene Michaelson, Executive Director, Montgomery County Council  
Patty Bubar, Acting Director, Department of Environmental Protection  
Richard Madaleno, Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Stan Edwards, Department of Environmental Protection

Attachments: Agency Request Compared to Executive Recommended

**FY 20-25 EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDED CIP  
Agency Request Compared to Executive Recommended  
WSSC**

Project Name (Project Number)	Agency Request	Executive Recommended
<b>Sewerage Bi-County</b>		
Blue Plains WWTP: Biosolids Mgmt PT2 (P954812)	10,164	10,164
Blue Plains WWTP: Enhanced Nutrient Removal (P083800)	1,507	1,507
Blue Plains WWTP: Liquid Train PT 2 (P954811)	22,831	22,831
Blue Plains WWTP: Plant Wide Projects (P023805)	10,487	10,487
Blue Plains: Pipelines and Appurtenances (P113804)	17,117	17,117
Land & Rights-of-Way Acquisition - Bi-County (S) (P163800)	50	50
Piscataway WRRF Bio-Energy Project (P063808)	58,118	58,118
Septage Discharge Facility Planning & Implement. (P103802)	12,276	12,276
Trunk Sewer Reconstruction Program (P113805)	75,326	75,326
<b>Sewerage Montgomery County</b>		
Cabin Branch WWPS (P023807)	1,402	1,402
Cabin Branch WWPS Force Main (P023808)	209	209
Cabin John Trunk Sewer Relief (P063807)	1,720	1,720
Clarksburg Wastewater Pumping Station (P173802)	1,335	1,335
Clarksburg WWPS Force Main (P173803)	22	22
Damascus Town Center WWPS Replacement (P382002)	520	520
Milestone Center Sewer Main (P173804)	507	507
Shady Grove Station Sewer Augmentation (P063806)	1,245	1,245
Spring Gardens WWPS Replacement (P382003)	921	921
<b>Water Bi-County</b>		
Duckett and Brighton Dam Upgrades (P073802)	6,838	6,838
Land & Rights-of-Way Acquisition - Bi-County (P983857)	1,720	1,720
Large Diameter Water Pipe Rehabilitation Program (P113803)	40,385	40,385
Patuxent Raw Water Pipeline (P063804)	8,580	8,580
Potomac WFP Consent Decree Program (P173801)	9,975	9,975
Potomac WFP Main Zone Pipeline (P133800)	460	460
Potomac WFP Pre-Filter Chlorination & Air Scour Improvements (P143803)	8,000	8,000
Potomac WFP Submerged Channel Intake (P033812)	-	-
Rocky Gorge Pump Station Upgrade (P063805)	1,025	1,025
<b>Water Montgomery County</b>		
Brink Zone Reliability Improvements (P143800)	6,085	6,085
Clarksburg Area Stage 3 Water Main, Part 4 (P113800)	271	271
Clarksburg Area Stage 3 Water Main, Part 5 (P163801)	397	397
Clarksburg Elevated Water Storage Facility (P973819)	12	12
Olney Standpipe Replacement (P063801)	174	174
Shady Grove Standpipe Replacement (P093801)	11	11
White Oak Water Mains Augmentation (P382001)	345	345

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