



PARKS + PLANNING

2018 SPRING SEMIANNUAL REPORT

▣ MONTGOMERY COUNTY (M-NCPPC)



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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

PRESIDENT RIEMER AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL:

I am pleased to present the Spring 2018 Semiannual Report on the work of the Planning Board, Planning Department and Department of Parks. We remain focused on connecting our work with the county's policies and goals in the areas of strengthened economic competitiveness, innovative approaches to housing and transportation, and effective public outreach.

Our plans continue to advance the principles of New Suburbanism, particularly in North Bethesda, where projects such as Pike and Rose and North Bethesda Center are helping to implement the recommendations of the recently approved White Flint plan as well as the White Flint 2, Rock Spring and Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area plans.

For the Parks Department, creating urban parks where residents can enjoy outdoor activities and socialize is a top priority. Our Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan, recently approved by the County Council, uses a data-driven methodology to identify where parks are needed most in densely populated areas.

We recently acquired a property that was identified by residents as the most important potential park site in downtown Bethesda. The future Capital Crescent Civic Green Urban Park will provide space for a wide range of activities in the bustling Bethesda Row area and we are excited about the development of this park.

Montgomery County's commitment to Vision Zero is reflected in several plans. The Veirs Mill Corridor and Forest Glen/Montgomery Hills plans aim to improve connectivity and safety along busy arterial roads. Our new Bicycle Master Plan envisions a world-class bicycling infrastructure allowing cyclists of all ages and abilities to feel safe riding to work and school. Meanwhile, our Parks Department is currently analyzing the safety of trail crossings and implementing a pilot project to improve 18 mid-block crossings.

To enhance outreach across communities, we have added Google translate to our GIS maps and developed digital feedback maps to solicit input from residents and business owners.

As summer 2018 approaches, Parks is busy planning for camps that will appeal to kids of all interests. Our Marye Wells Harley Dream Scholarship will begin providing financial assistance so that more children can have access to these experiences.

I am extremely proud of our staff and their efforts to promote excellence in planning and design. I believe their work represents the very best being done anywhere on land use, transportation and parks issues, and we share a deep commitment to serve our county and its residents.

Respectfully submitted,



Casey Anderson | Planning Board Chair | Chair, M-NCPPC



NEW SUBURBANISM

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Increasing demand for walkable, mixed-use communities that include parks and open spaces has led to a new planning approach to the suburbs. This New Suburbanism is most recently being realized in transit-oriented developments related to several plans approved by the County Council in 2017 for North Bethesda, including Rock Spring, Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area and White Flint 2. A new urban park has been acquired by Montgomery Parks in downtown Bethesda and will exemplify the type of open space recommended in the new Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan recently approved by the County Council.

The New Suburbanism will influence the update of the General Plan, the seminal 1964 vision for Montgomery County. Last revised in 1993, this plan will be advanced to reflect recent changes in population, community development and technologies so the county can maintain its high quality of life.

ENERGIZED PUBLIC SPACES FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN

Using data-driven methodology, the Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan will measure and map the community's access to parks and open spaces in the most populated parts of the county. This information will help identify and prioritize where and how to spend limited public funds, allowing the community more access to parks and open spaces. The plan's innovative methodology and approach to map outdoor experiences, approved by the County Council in February 2018, will contribute to future master plans, park-specific plans and park planning studies.

PLACEMAKING

In addition to presenting his ideas at the third session of the Winter Speaker Series, Ethan Kent of New York-based Project for Public Spaces led a staff workshop that focused on placemaking and how to make Montgomery County's public realm both livable and lovable.



◀ ETHAN KENT PRESENTS TO STAFF



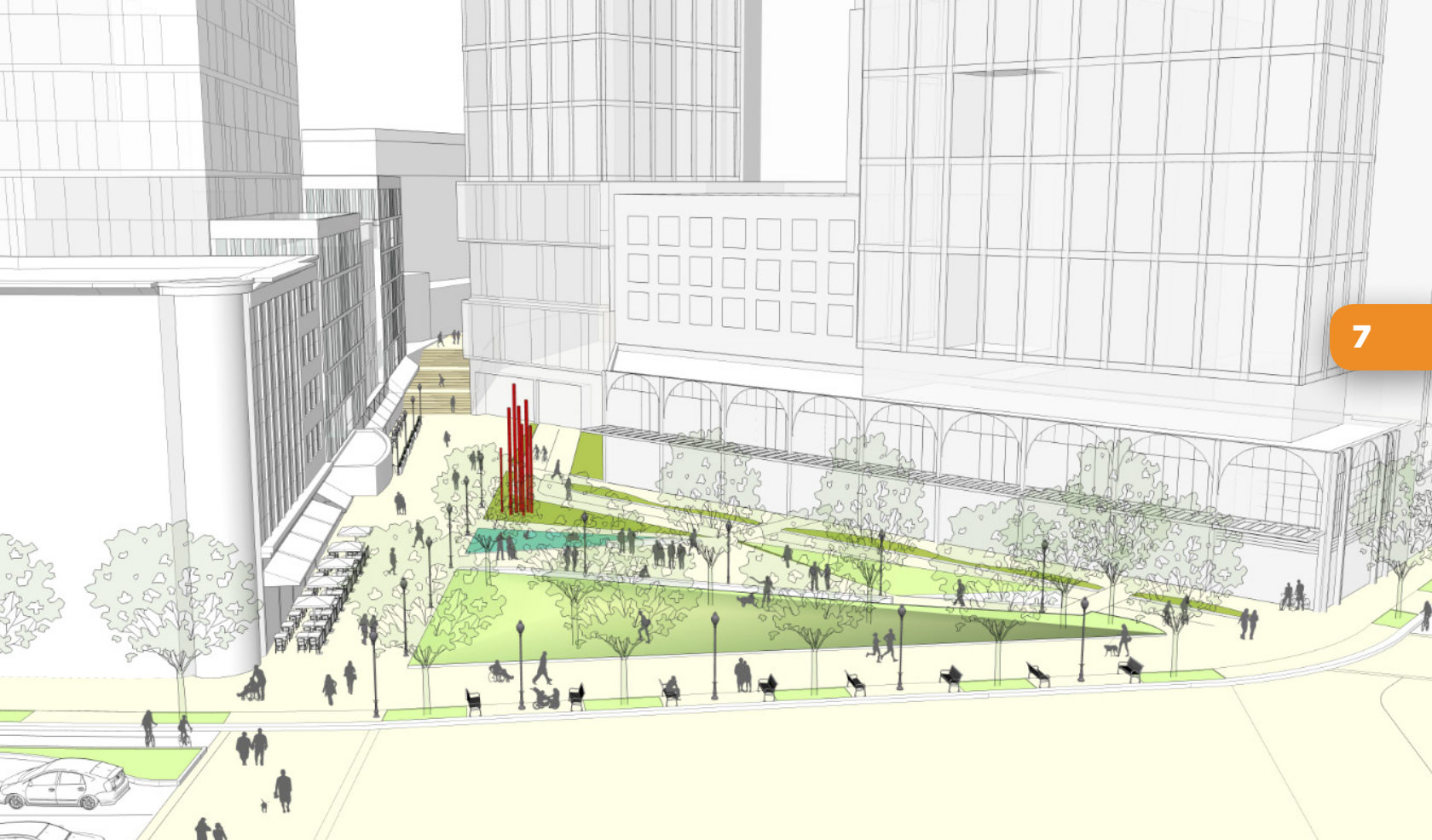
UPDATING THE GENERAL PLAN

The seminal planning guide for Montgomery County, known as **the General Plan**, was adopted in 1964, revised in 1993 and proposed to be updated in 2019. Recent innovations in cyberspace and anticipated technological innovations are disrupting old land use models and assumptions about how to plan for growth and provide the infrastructure needed to serve residents and workers over the next 40-50 years. The county has already seen a steady decline in its office market over the past 10 years and it has been challenging to meet the affordable housing needs of a growing population. We are planning a General Plan update to respond to these trends and keep Montgomery County at the forefront of planning and development, maintain its competitive edge and preserve its quality of life.



FROM PARKING LOTS TO PLACES

The cause of **New Suburbanism** is advancing, particularly in North Bethesda, with exciting projects in the works. New developments, such as Pike and Rose and North Bethesda Center, are following the recommendations of the 2010 White Flint Sector Plan as well as the White Flint 2 Sector Plan, Rock Spring Master Plan and Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan, all approved by the County Council in late 2017.



CAPITAL CRESCENT CIVIC GREEN

A primary goal of the 2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan is the enhancement and creation of additional parks and open spaces in this large population center. In December 2017, Montgomery Parks finalized its first of many new urban park acquisitions with the purchase of a nearly half acre site from Federal Realty Investment Trust. The property at the intersection of Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues will be called the Capital Crescent Civic Green Urban Park.

The park will become the first of three civic gathering spaces in the center of Bethesda. The park will provide community open space for recreation and casual use, serve as a critical access point to the future Purple Line transit station and a gateway to the Capital Crescent Trail.

This important public acquisition now provides the Maryland Transit Authority with the necessary access and work area for constructing, operating and maintaining the Bethesda Purple Line transit station.

TRAINS, CARS + BICYCLES

Public hearings and Planning Board work sessions have been held for the MARC Rail Communities Plan, update to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways and the Bicycle Master Plan. The County Council will review the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways and the Bicycle Master Plan in 2018 and the MARC Rail Communities Plan in 2019.



BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

Planning Board Public Hearing
January 25, 2018

Planning Board Work Sessions:
February 15, 2018
February 22, 2018
March 1, 2018



MASTER PLAN OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSITWAYS

Planning Board Public Hearing
February 15, 2018

Planning Board Work Sessions:
March 1, 2018
March 8, 2018
March 15, 2018



MARC RAIL COMMUNITIES PLAN

Planning Board Public Hearing
February 1, 2018

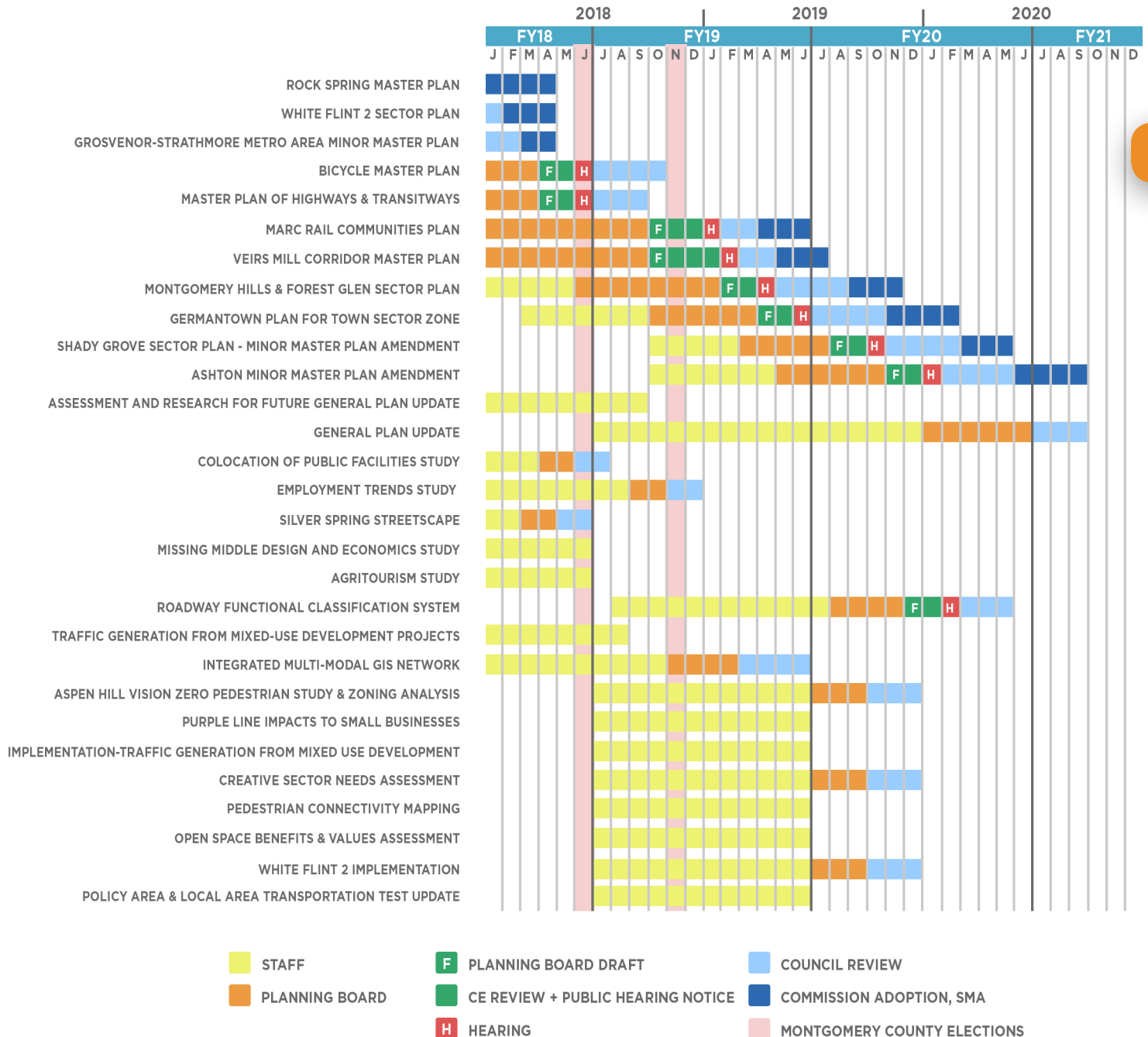
Planning Board Work Sessions:
Spring 2018

ABOUT THE PLANNING PROCESS

A plan provides comprehensive recommendations for the use of publicly and privately owned land. Each plan reflects a vision of the future that responds to the unique character of the local community within the context of a countywide perspective. This vision is developed by the Montgomery County Planning Department in consultation with community members through public meetings and outreach tools. When making land use decisions, public officials and private individuals should refer to plans as well as relevant county policies. Learn more about the process at montgomeryplanning.org/master-planning-process



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PLANNING FOR SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY

The **Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan** aims to improve the pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, connectivity and safety along a 4-mile stretch of Veirs Mill Road from Wheaton to Rockville. The plan explores opportunities to realize the county's **Vision Zero** policy for reducing traffic fatalities and severe injuries, and provide more walkable, neighborhood-serving development at strategic locations. The planning effort complements the Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit Study recently completed by the Maryland State Highway Administration in coordination with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

The **Forest Glen/Montgomery Hills Sector Plan** is being developed to address land uses and traffic conditions along the Georgia Avenue corridor from 16th Street in Silver Spring to the Forest Glen Metro Station. The plan complements efforts to improve the corridor by the Maryland State Highway Administration that will affect properties on both sides of the road. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has expressed interest in redeveloping its property near the Forest Glen Metrorail station.

◀ VEIRS MILL ROAD

VISION ZERO

0 FATALITIES ON COUNTY
ROADS BY 2030

79 INTERSECTIONS
BEING EXAMINED

18 PROJECTS
UNDERWAY

Vision Zero is a countywide initiative to eliminate fatalities and severe injuries on county roads by 2030. Montgomery Parks is looking at 79 intersections where our hiker-biker trails cross the roads. Intersections have been prioritized based on factors like speed limit and number of lanes. A project is underway to design improvements to 18 mid-block crossings, including six hiker-biker and 12 natural surface trails. Construction of these improvements will begin in summer 2018. A special interagency working group is studying additional safety improvements to the intersection where the Matthew Henson Trail crosses **Veirs Mill Road**.

PARKS UPDATES

POP UP PARKS-URBAN PARKS

The Pop Up in Montgomery Parks campaign is part of an ongoing initiative designed to bring more people into parks to recreate and reconnect with their community. All programs and events are free and Play Specialists are onsite to help people discover the amazing things that they can do in their local park.

Activities such as rock wall climbing, climb-a-tree, movie night, touch-a-truck and a mobile bike track attracted more than 2,200 people in 2017.

PEPCO TRAIL

In January 2018, Montgomery Parks finalized a unique partnership with the Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) and Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE). That month, the organizations broke ground on the first phase of the 13-mile project, a new 6.5-mile natural-surface trail connecting Muddy Branch Stream Valley to South Germantown Recreation Park. Pepco is the landowner of the trail and will serve as a design and permitting partner; Montgomery Parks will construct and patrol the trail, and MORE will maintain it.



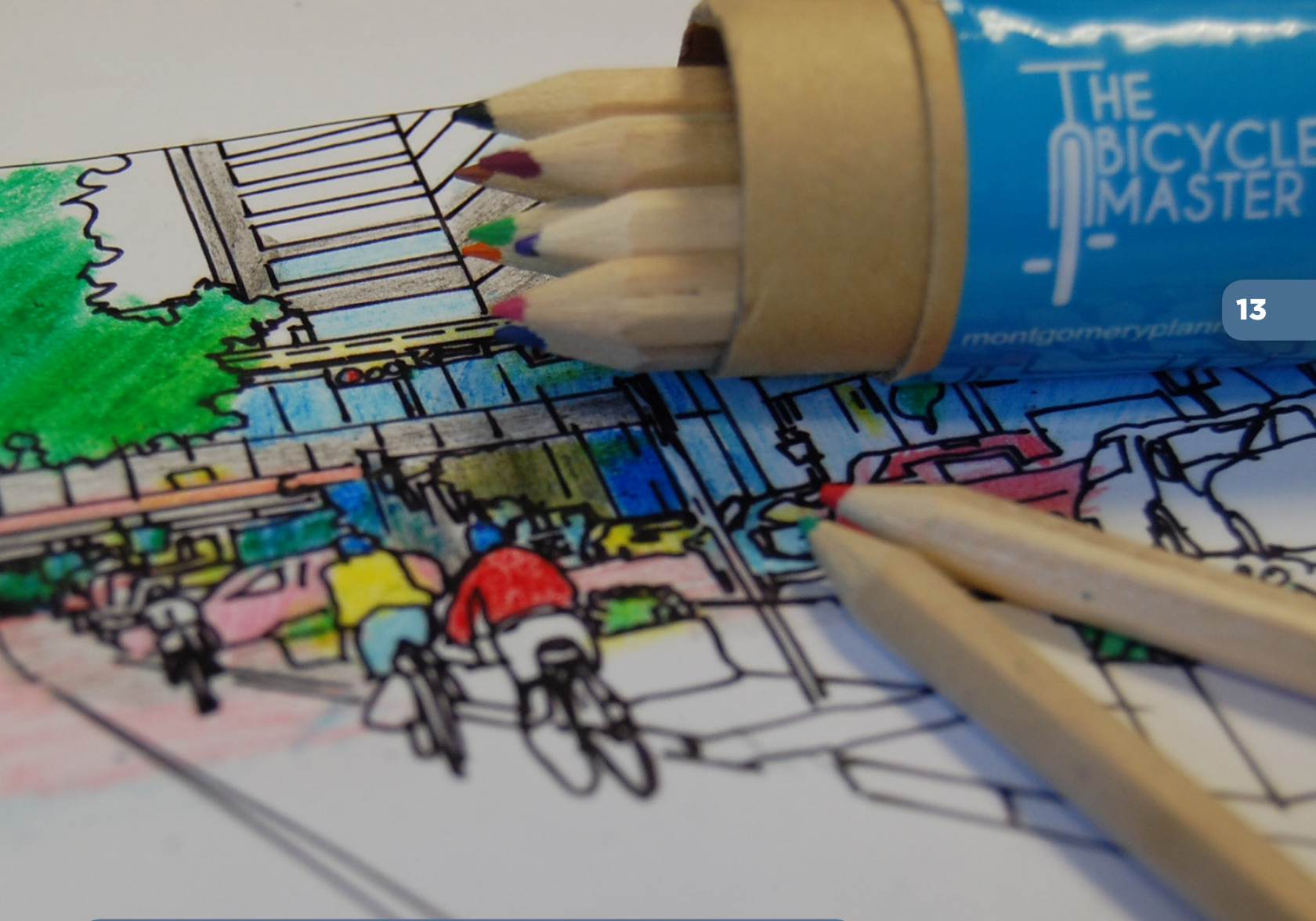
ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

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◀ VEIRS MILL CORRIDOR PLAN TEAM AT TASTE OF WHEATON

Citizen engagement is essential to ensuring plans and projects reflect the needs and desires of the public. The Planning and Parks Departments recently developed new outreach tools to increase community participation, from digital feedback maps for soliciting comments on planning efforts to showcasing ways of improving athletic fields in parks. Among these efforts is the Bicycle Master Plan Coloring Book, developed to present the types of bikeways in the plan. The low-stress activity of coloring mirrors the plan's focus on a low-stress, safe bicycling network. Public engagement in our parks includes volunteer and group efforts to clean up debris and trash, and improve the water quality of streams.



BICYCLE MASTER PLAN COLORING BOOK

This free, 34-page book was developed by the Planning Department staff to present the types of bikeways included in the plan to the public in an accessible, fun way. Since the goal of the plan is to create a low-stress bicycle network that will let people of all ages and abilities feel comfortable riding a bike, the book seemed fitting, since coloring has also been shown to be a stress-relieving activity. Each black and white page depicts different types of bikeways, such as neighborhood greenways, separated bike lanes and trails. To date, the coloring book has been downloaded more than 1,600 times.



WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Utilizing Water Quality Protection Funding, Montgomery Parks stewards more than 500 miles of streams and their valleys throughout Montgomery County. Stream restoration is one important mechanism that Parks relies on to mitigate the damage to our waterways and problems caused before stormwater management regulations were enacted. Since 2010, Parks has constructed 13,000 linear feet and reviewed and permitted another 97,214 linear feet of projects on parkland for a total of 110,197 linear feet – nearly 21 miles of stream restoration.

In-house projects are designed for water quality benefits and to protect and enhance existing park infrastructure. Volunteers and watershed groups play a crucial role in improving water quality through both their participation in clean-ups and in their advocacy on behalf of environmental issues.

IN 2017

252 CLEANUP
PROJECTS

4,500 VOLUNTEERS

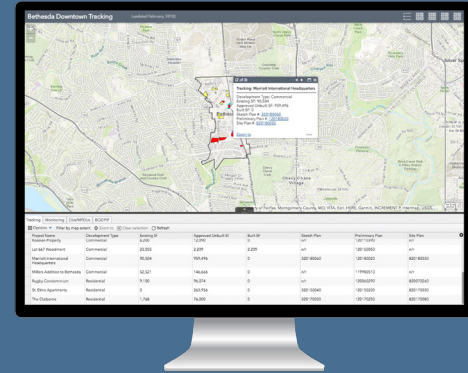
129.7K POUNDS OF TRASH +
RECYCLABLES REMOVED

BETHESDA DOWNTOWN MONITORING AND TRACKING



The **2017 Approved and Adopted Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan** is being implemented through focused coordination between public and private interests. The plan's vision stems from the goals and recommendations within this sector plan to enhance Downtown Bethesda over the next 20 years. The aim of the plan is to

achieve a truly sustainable downtown by focusing on components that will bolster the elements in most need of enhancement, including increased parks and open space, affordable housing, environmental innovation, economic competitiveness and design excellence. The plan's vision will be implemented through various actions, including zoning, a park impact payment and annual monitoring and reporting.



The **Monitoring and Tracking Program** is an online tool that will keep track of proposed development and track the approved square footage in downtown Bethesda against the overall cap on development set forth in the Bethesda Overlay Zone. The information and data from this online tool will be used in reporting to the Planning Board and developing the annual monitoring and reporting document.



ONLINE TOOLS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Translation tools were added to GIS maps to encourage foreign-born and non-English speakers to participate in planning efforts. A digital feedback map was developed to solicit observations from residents, business owners and stakeholders about the assets and challenges in the **Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan** area. The comments about transit, trails, retail, parks, employment, housing and connectivity in the neighborhoods around Veirs Mill Road helped to inform the master planning recommendations.

PARKS OUTREACH PROGRAMS

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SPECIAL EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Throughout the year, Parks hosts dozens of festivals and special events that aim to bring our vast county together. Not only do these events build community, but they focus on community-centered issues like sustainability, recreation, historic preservation and more. The autumnal Harvest Festival recreates 19th-century farm life and Maple Sugaring Days celebrate the sweet life with freshly-tapped maple syrup. Every year, talented cyclists take big air at MoCo Epic and, for those who like to keep their two feet on the ground, the Parks Half Marathon is held annually. In May 2018, the collaborative Montgomery County Greenfest, the largest environmental festival in the county, makes the path to a greener life easier to find. These events are often free and promote park usage all year round.

MARYE WELLS-HARLEY DREAM SCHOLARSHIP

Honoring former Montgomery Planning Board Commissioner Marye Wells-Harley, this new initiative provides children ages six to 14 with an opportunity to attend a Montgomery Parks' summer camp. The scholarship pays tribute to the great work accomplished by Commissioner Wells-Harley on the Montgomery County Planning Board as well as her work as the director of Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation. Scholarships are awarded based on financial need and provide children the opportunity to experience the summer camp of their choice. Due to generous community donations, 13 scholarships have been awarded and applications are still be accepted for summer 2018.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES, UPGRADES AND TRAINING

We are committed to upholding the integrity of the Americans with Disabilities Act by delivering appropriate and reasonable inclusive services, modifications and physical accessibility to ensure social equality and inclusion of all citizens. Our Program Access Office continues to promote and enhance access for all by coordinating direct and indirect services to the public and conducting ongoing inclusion trainings to staff. Creating access to our park system is an ongoing program and, to date, our team has removed more than 1,500 barriers to accessibility within our parks and facilities, hosted disability management training for 1,500 personnel and provided more than 80 direct and indirect services to park patrons within the past six months.



ATHLETIC FIELD SHOWCASE

Montgomery Parks is committed to providing quality athletic surfaces to promote recreation, teamwork and active lifestyles. The Athletic Field Showcase highlights the multiple ways we work to improve the quality of our athletic fields. Demonstrations of our state-of-the-art equipment and techniques show the community how we manage and maintain county athletic fields.

The next event will be held in June 2018 at Laytonia Recreational Park and will highlight our efforts, such as infiltration, drainage and soil metrics, for improved playing activities on for current and newly planned surfaces. Moisture management on athletic fields is paramount for player safety, soil structure and sustainable plant health throughout the year.

NATIONAL APA PRESENTATIONS

Five proposals from the Planning Department were selected for sessions at the American Planning Association's national conference to be held from April 21 through April 24, 2018 in New Orleans. These presentations will be given by Department leadership and staff, and Planning Board members:

- Lessons in New Suburbanism
- Smart Tools for Recreation Planning
- Resilient Retail in the Internet Age
- Engaging Hard-to-Reach Communities
- Public Art Ecosystems.

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LONG BRANCH-GARLAND LOCAL PARK CLEAN-UP

Montgomery Parks is working to promote social equity, strengthen engagement and support communities throughout the county. Park improvement projects, park and stream cleanups, park police presence and park activation programming are just some of the ways we are providing outreach and community engagement. In the Long Branch community, Montgomery Parks staff made significant improvements to the Long Branch-Garland Local Park—cleaning up overgrown brush, planting flowers and installing soccer goals, grills and picnic tables. Parks staff work with people in the community to host regular park clean-ups and participate in community events to build relationships with families and kids.



STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS



◀ A RENDERING OF THE PLAZA AT 7359 WISCONSIN AVE, BETHESDA

New parks and mixed-use development in various communities throughout the county reflect the continuing health of our economy. Efforts to strengthen our competitiveness with other jurisdictions include new solar arrays in two parks sites to save energy and shorter times for reviewing project site plans than in the past. New trails for mountain bikes aim to entice more riders to our parks. Both the Planning and Parks Departments recently held speaker series to focus on the economic future of the suburbs and trends in suburban parks.



PARKS + PLANNING SPEAKER SERIES

PLANNING DEPARTMENT WINTER SPEAKER SERIES

The Planning Department held a three-part Winter Speaker Series in December 2017 and January and February 2018. The series, titled *The Economic Future of the Suburbs: Infill, Commerce, Placemaking*, examined the shift away from sprawling, car-centric places to more walkable, mixed-use and urban-style communities. The sessions presented strategies for infill housing, examined retail trends, discussed the conversion of aging office buildings to new uses and looked at ways of creating more vibrant, active parks and public spaces in the suburbs.

PARKS SPEAKER SERIES

In 2018, Montgomery Parks introduced the Parks Speaker Series. These monthly presentations are given by highly acclaimed experts who address open space trends and trail needs in suburbs that are becoming more densely developed. The series has attracted urban parks experts from Canada, New York and Minnesota. They discussed topics such as urban park planning and development, partnering to have more activated parks and the safety needs of urban parks. The presentations are free and open to the public.



TRAIL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

To create more opportunities within the already vast and intricate trail system of Montgomery Parks, we are partnering with Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE) to apply for a Ride Center Certification. This status, given by the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA), will entice more riders to our trails as destinations to mountain bike. The pre-application was submitted in fall 2017 and the full application was submitted in January 2018. The assessment process will begin this spring with members of the Parks Department, MORE and IMBA, and will hopefully result in accreditation. In the event our trails do not meet the minimum for the award, we are hopeful the report will show how we can improve and provide the best experience for our users.



PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION LEARNING IN SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS

Our continued partnership with the University of Maryland's Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) program recently delivered five projects addressing ongoing challenges facing Montgomery Parks. These student efforts addressed sustainability as a health protection measure, the monetary benefits of parks and open spaces, community gardens, managing graywater and stormwater runoff, and nature centers. The work of students allows Parks to implement programs, gain insights and develop best practices. The ongoing partnership continues to provide high-quality and low-cost solutions to challenges facing Montgomery Parks.

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PARKS VISITATION

Montgomery Parks' facilities connect people to activities that promote education as well as healthy and active lifestyles.

PARKS VISITOR STATISTICS (2017)



226,601 BROOKSIDE
GARDENS VISITORS



599,119 ICE
RINK VISITORS



118,723 TENNIS
CENTER VISITORS



446,388 PARK
FACILITIES



38,050 EVENT
CENTERS

CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL USAGE

BETHESDA COUNTER (COUNTER #1) 2017



841,945 TOTAL USERS
324,971 CYCLISTS
516,974 WALKERS

DALECARLIA TUNNEL COUNTER (COUNTER #2) 2017



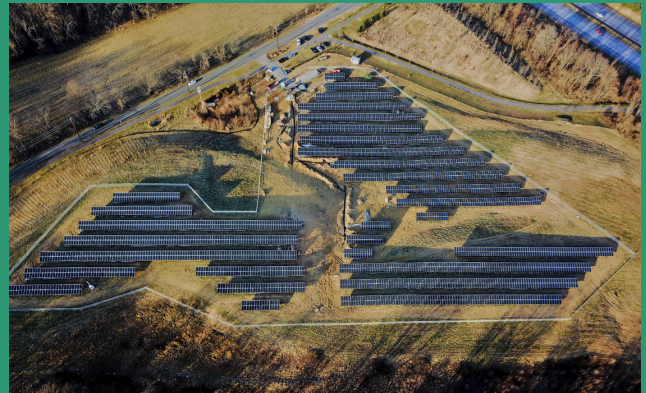
663,134 TOTAL USERS
505,155 CYCLISTS
157,979 WALKERS

SOLAR FIELDS

Nearly 2.5 megawatts (MW) of ground-mounted solar arrays, comprising more than 7,000 solar panels, have been installed across sites in Rock Creek Regional Park and South Germantown Recreational Park.

The combined arrays will produce about 3.5 million kWh of solar electricity annually to offset 2,877 tons of greenhouse gases each year. This offset is equivalent to the carbon sequestered by more than 3,000 acres of forest or the amount of carbon dioxide generated in the production of the grid-supplied electricity used by nearly 400 average American homes in a typical year.

These projects, completed through a long-term power purchase agreement with Standard Solar, allow Montgomery Parks to use a clean, renewable energy source for park facilities with no upfront costs. These projects will help lower utility bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all while contributing to smart, clean and resilient energy resources across the region.

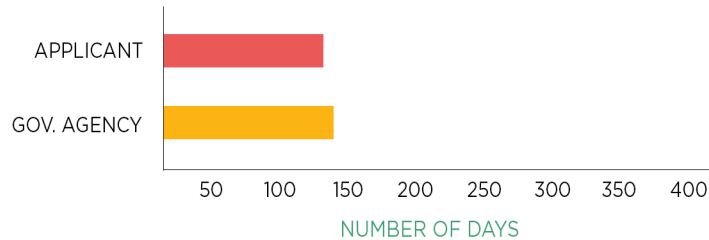


Rock Creek Regional Park Solar Field

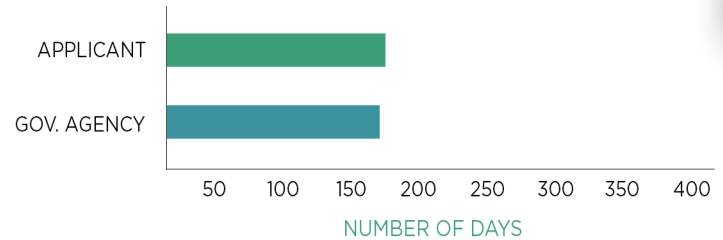
REGULATORY STATISTICS

AVERAGE RECORD PLAT REVIEW TIME

FY17

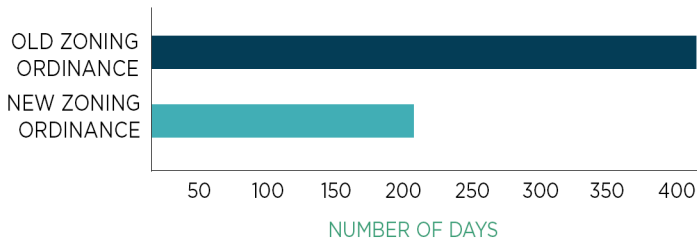


FY18



23

AVERAGE SITE PLAN REVIEW TIME



Get more Development Statistics at
montgomeryplanning.org/planning-stat

UPCOMING RESEARCH PROJECTS

Our Research and Special Projects Division is completing significant analyses and studies of retail trends, senior housing and colocation of public facilities.



TIMELINE OF RELEASES

Colocation of Public Facilities – completed and released in March 2018.

Senior Housing – completed and released in March 2018.

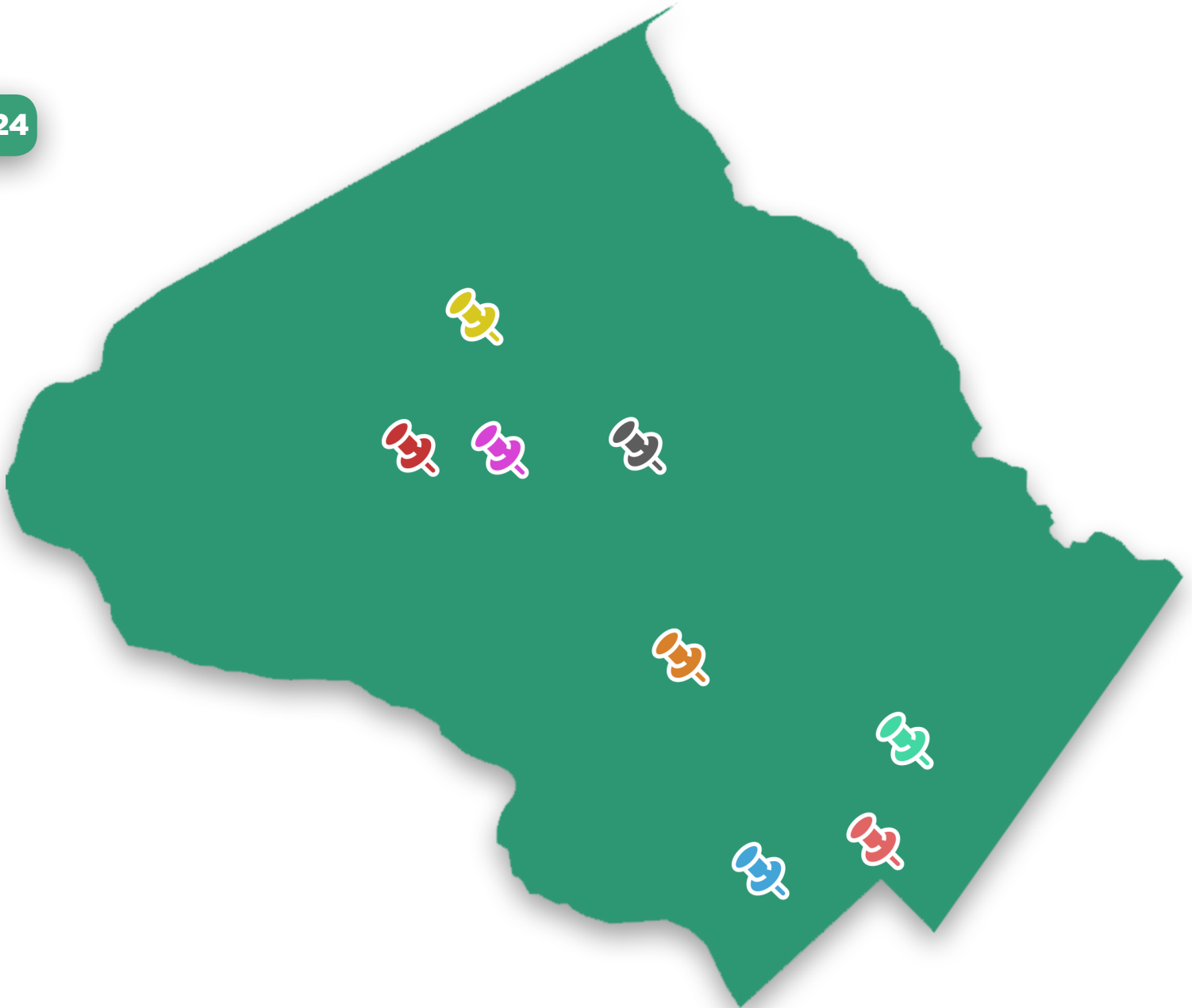
Employment Trends – completed in spring 2018.

Retail Trends – completed and will be reviewed by the County Council in spring 2018.

Learn more at montgomeryplanning.org/research.

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE COUNTY

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SILVER SPRING

8600 Georgia Avenue
Elizabeth Square
The Guardian
900 Thayer



DOWNTOWN BETHESDA

Marriott International Headquarters
7272 Wisconsin Avenue
Artery Plaza
4540 Montgomery Avenue
ZOM
7359 Wisconsin Avenue



WHITE OAK

VIVA White Oak
Hillandale Gateway



WHITE FLINT

Pike and Rose Phase 2
Ourisman Ford at Montgomery Mall



MONTGOMERY VILLAGE

Bloom Montgomery Village



GERMANTOWN

Top Golf



OLNEY

Bradford's Landing



DAMASCUS

Victory Haven



7272 Wisconsin Avenue



VIVA White Oak



Victory Haven

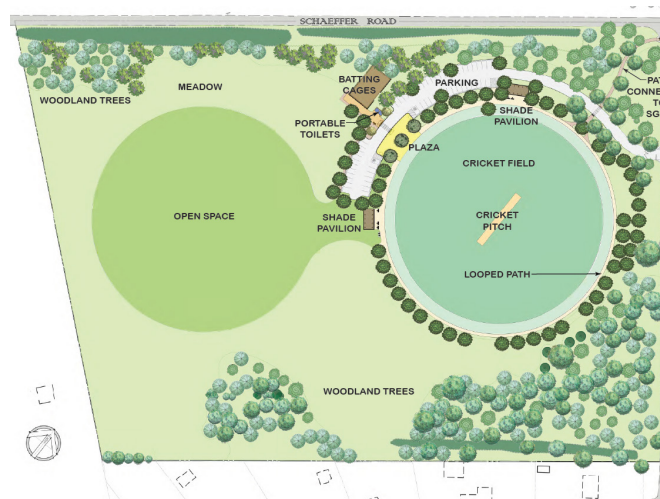
NEW PARKS + PARK ADDITIONS

South Germantown Recreation Park will soon be home to our first full-size cricket field. Construction started in September 2017 and is scheduled to be completed in spring 2019. The field is expected to be heavily reserved for permitted use and host the more than 20 cricket teams in Montgomery County. Field amenities include a cricket batting cage, 59 parking spaces, a central pedestrian plaza with area for food trucks, a portable restroom shelter, a trail connection to the existing park, a viewing mound for spectators, shade pavilions, bioretention areas, reforestation areas and an open space turf area for athletic field development.

Western Grove Urban Park in Chevy Chase Village formally opened in fall 2017 with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting. The 1.9-acre park features carefully preserved specimen trees, specially paved and lighted pedestrian walkways with seating areas, an ornamental water feature, a nature play area, a stone terrace with movable seating and an interactive sundial using a person's shadow to tell time. It is also the first park in Montgomery Parks system with Wi-Fi.

Laytonia Recreational Park, a 34-acre park located in Gaithersburg, is close to completion, with a grand opening planned for June 2018. The park boasts one synthetic and two natural-surface rectangular fields, and a baseball field with lighting and bleachers for a premium game experience. Supporting facilities include a shelter/restroom building, a playground, a half-basketball court and trails.

Clarkmont Local Park is a new 10-acre developer-built park in Clarksburg. The park features a full-sized athletic field, a 50-space parking lot, picnic shelters, a large playground area, a flexible open space, site furnishings, plantings and a network of pathways connected to the surrounding Cabin Branch community. The park is scheduled to open in early summer 2018.





RENDERING OF THE MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN BETHESDA

OTHER PROJECTS + ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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◀ BROOKSIDE GARDENS GREENHOUSE

Both the Planning and Parks Departments continue to win recognition for their efforts through national and local awards. From the National Association for Industrial and Office Parks' (NAIOP's) Best of the Best Award honoring Montgomery Planning to the Governor's Crime Prevention Award for Montgomery Parks, the accolades honor a wide range of plans and initiatives undertaken by our talented staff. Our accomplishments include organizing and co-sponsoring the Makeover Montgomery 4 conference scheduled for May 9 through May 11 in College Park and Silver Spring, MD. This regional event will offer presentations and discussions centered on ways of achieving smart, healthy, inclusive and competitive communities.

BROOKSIDE GARDENS GROWING GREENHOUSE

This project was part of phase five of Brookside Garden's master plan and is expected to be completed in early 2018. Small, inefficient growing spaces are being replaced with a state-of-the-art glass greenhouse that features energy-efficient design and a 25,000-gallon cistern to capture and reuse rainwater. This project was made possible by a generous donation from Joan O'Rourke, the founding president of the Friends of Brookside Gardens.

CANDY CANE CITY

The playground inside Meadowbrook Local Park in Silver Spring (below) is one of the oldest and most heavily used playgrounds in the county's southern area. In August 2017, our maintenance facility gave the playground a much-needed facelift by adding new landscaping, installing new benches and fencing, adding ADA-accessible parking spaces and repainting playground amenities with red and white stripes.



PLANNING WINS NAIOP AWARD

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In October 2017, the DC-Maryland chapter of NAIOP (National Association for Industrial and Office Parks) honored the Planning Department with its Best of the Best Award in Excellence in Quality Land Use and Collaboration in Urban Design. The Planning Department is one of six winners of the 2017 Best of the Best Award and the first governmental entity to be awarded this honor.



▶ PLANNING DIRECTOR GWEN WRIGHT
ACCEPTING THE NAIOP AWARD



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MAKEOVER MONTGOMERY 4



**COMPETITIVE
COMMUNITIES**



**HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES**



**INCLUSIVE
COMMUNITIES**



**SMART
COMMUNITIES**

Scheduled from May 9 through May 11, 2018 in College Park and Silver Spring, MD, this regional conference is co-sponsored by the Planning Department and University of Maryland's National Center for Smart Growth. This year's event will focus on healthy, smart, inclusive and competitive communities. Presentations will ADDRESS innovative planning and policy tools, and strategies that can help transform our suburbs into exciting, sustainable communities.

Learn more at MakeoverMontgomery4.com



PARKS AWARDS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

An independent jury of experts appointed by the Montgomery County Planning Department awarded Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area with its top 2017 Design Excellence Award for Landscapes and Open Space. Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park was honored with a Design Excellence Jury Citation in the Landscapes and Open Space category. Woodlawn Museum at Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park received a Jury Citation in the Building and Sites category.

SCHOOL TO WORK BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR

In October 2017, Montgomery Parks received the School to Work Business Partner of the Year Award from Ivymount School and Programs. This award recognizes the partnership of Montgomery Parks with Ivymount in hosting students at Black Hill Nature Programs, Brookside Nature Center, Locust Grove Nature Center and Wheaton Park Stables.

EMPLOYMENT TRAILBLAZER AWARD

Montgomery Parks was awarded the 2017 Employment Trailblazer Award at the annual Seeking Empowerment, Employment and Community (SEEC) Employer Networking and Recognition Breakfast for public and private organizations.

GOVERNOR'S CRIME PREVENTION AWARD

Park Police Sergeant Sabrina Pirtle received the Maryland Governor's Crime Prevention Award in recognition for her work with troubled youth in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION BICYCLIST CHOICE AWARD

The Maryland-National Parks and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) won the Best Improvement for Biking in Maryland Award for the new regulations allowing bicycle commuting after dark.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS PRESIDENTS AWARD

The Montgomery County Road Runners recognized M-NCPPC with its Presidents Award for our longstanding commitment to building and maintaining a world-class parks system.



SPRING STREET BIKE LANE RIBBON-CUTTING

Members of the Montgomery County Planning Department, Planning Board and County Council joined the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) to celebrate the opening of the Spring Street separated bike lane in Downtown Silver Spring with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and community bike ride on Saturday, October 14, 2017. The event was the first in a series of community bike rides taking place as a part of the Planning Department's continued focus on Silver Spring Placemaking pop-up events.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) constructed the separated bike lanes along Spring and Cedar Streets in downtown Silver Spring. The new bikeway is separated from vehicles by a painted buffer and flexible posts to keep cars from intruding into the bike lanes. In addition to the barriers, parked cars will provide a buffer. The bikeway runs along Spring Street from Second Avenue to Ellsworth Drive and will continue along Cedar Street to Wayne Avenue.



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 **MONTGOMERY COUNTY (M-NCPPC)**