



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

# Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP)

Department of Parks and Recreation  
Prince George's County

Montgomery County Department of Parks

## FY25 - FY30

The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning (M-NCPPC)  
Comprehensive Recreation Program Plan (CRPP) FY25-FY30

NEW	UPDATED	NO CHANGE
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# Executive Summary

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) excels in delivering park and recreation services for more than two million residents, plus visitors. M-NCPPC is a nationally recognized planning, parks, and recreation agency. M-NCPPC is the only six-time winner of the national Gold Medal Award, which is managed and governed by the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

M-NCPPC's bi-county structure facilitates service delivery across two "majority-minority" counties that include urban, suburban, and rural communities. M-NCPPC serves residents from many cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic backgrounds with programs for all ages and ability levels. From 2018-2023 we had 3,147,180 program registrations in arts, aquatics, wellness, sports, nature, history, STEAM, crafts, afterschool activities, day camps, and more.

In 2023, M-NCPPC waived \$215,737 in permitting fees and worked with 383 community partners, including 101 government agencies, to extend M-NCPPC's program reach. Within the last three years, M-NCPPC provided millions of dollars to almost 100 partners to help them provide equitable access to their programs and events. Our Event Co-Sponsorship Program waives permitting fees for third-party special events hosted in our parks in exchange for M-NCPPC title sponsorship and our logo's recognition in all event marketing.

This 2025 edition of the Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP) is designed to advance the continuing effort to expand these recreation and leisure opportunities qualitatively and quantitatively. It also represents a welcome bi-county initiative to strengthen bonds between staff within Montgomery and Prince George's counties doing similar work. The objectives of this five-year plan will be reviewed and updated in 2027 and 2030, respectively. The development of the plan reflects the work of cross-Departmental staff, Division Chiefs, and other key programming staff.

This Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan is organized into three sections:

- I. M-NCPPC Background and Organization**
- II. Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation Action Plan**
- III. Montgomery County Parks Action Plan**

# M-NCPPC Background and Organization

- About M-NCPPC
- Demographics
- Recreation and Leisure Trends
- Program and Service Determinants
- Participant Involvement
- Persons with Disabilities

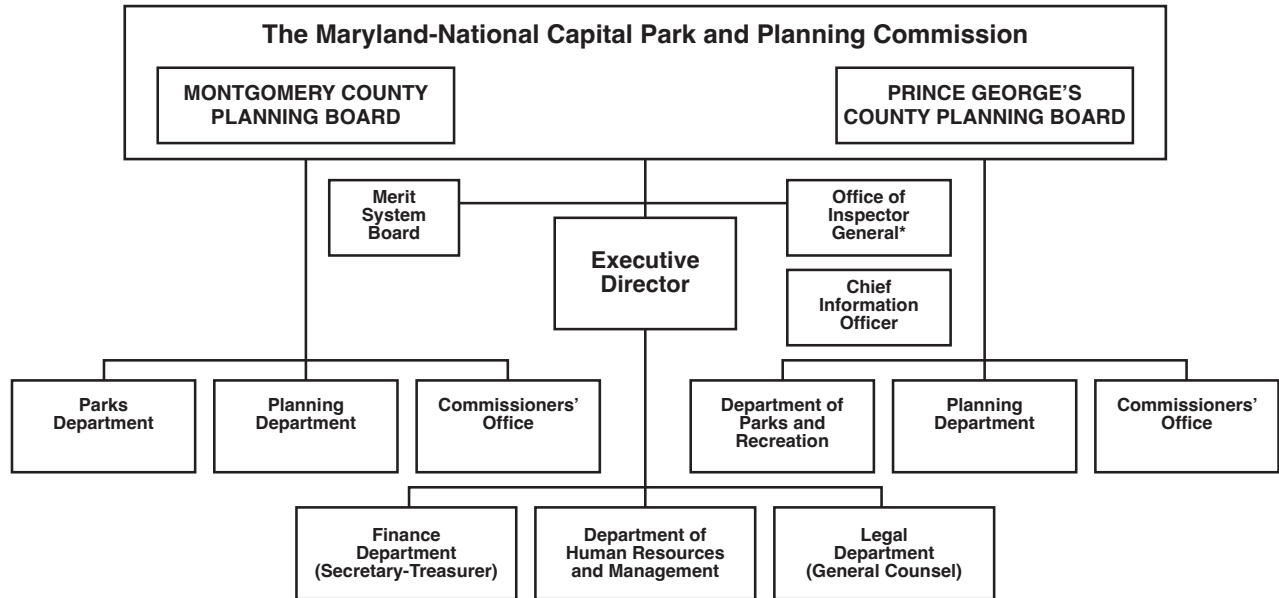
## I. About M-NCPPC

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is a bi-county agency operating in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Our mission addresses three major program areas that respond to the vision of our founders and that are incorporated into our Charter. They are 1) to manage physical growth and plan communities; 2) to protect and steward natural, cultural, and historic resources; and 3) to provide leisure and recreational experiences. The Central Administrative Services Department (Human Resources and Management, Finance, and Legal) serve the operating Departments in each County (see Organization Chart), including the Montgomery County Department of Parks (Montgomery Parks) and the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County. Montgomery County government has a Department of Recreation that provides most recreation programs offered in that county.



# THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION




\*Office of Inspector General reports to the Audit Committee.

Work is accomplished through implementation of strategic plans and functional master plans. Prince George's County's Formula 2040 Functional Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (Formula 2040) and Montgomery County's Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS) provide strategic direction.

A Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) is prepared for each county to maintain eligibility for Program Open Space funding from the State of Maryland. These plans serve as the master plans for the park system in each county.

The Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP) is an outgrowth of these strategic planning and program forecasting tools. It builds on prior groundwork for achieving a more business oriented and financially sustainable approach to providing recreation programs. It also documents how both the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County and the Montgomery County Parks Department use needs assessment, community involvement, and performance data to set programming objectives to plan for the equitable provision of program opportunities.

M-NCPPC's programming embraces NRPA's pillars of conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. Beyond offering 15,000 + classes a year, M-NCPPC commands a significant role in improving the quality of life for the communities we serve.



This CRPP is based on an assessment of recreation programs offered by M-NCPPC and other program providers, current service area demographics, and national and local recreation trends. These assessments cover key recreation trends for each programmatic area, i.e., youth, adult, and senior services, therapeutic recreation and inclusion services, health and wellness, sports, aquatics, historic resource management and tourism, environmental stewardship, and the arts.

M-NCPPC was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1927. The laws governing the Commission are codified under Division II, Land Use Article of the Maryland Annotated Code. M-NCPPC is a bi-county agency, empowered to acquire, develop, maintain, and administer a regional system of parks in a defined Metropolitan District within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland, contiguous with the District of Columbia. M-NCPPC is also empowered to prepare and administer a general plan for the physical development of a larger Regional District in the same area. The two Districts now embrace all of Maryland's Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, except for certain incorporated municipalities in each County.

Responsibility for public recreation in Prince George's County was transferred to M-NCPPC from the County Recreation Department in July 1970. The legislation provided for Countywide taxes to support recreation in the County.

The members of the Commission from each County also serve as County Planning Board members to facilitate, review, and administer the matters affecting their respective County. To carry out their functions, the County Planning Boards meet at least once a week. The County Councils set priorities for M-NCPPC park and planning operations through periodic review of M-NCPPC's operating and capital improvement budgets and work programs.

M-NCPPC administers a park system that comprises over 65,000 acres including stream-valley parks, large regional parks, neighborhood parks, and park-school recreational areas, providing a wide spectrum of recreation facilities. Its staff consists of over 2,000 career employees - planners, park and recreation administrators, park police, and administrative staff. In addition, it employs over 5,000 seasonal workers, primarily for its numerous park and recreation programs.

The operating and administrative functions of M-NCPPC are financed primarily by property taxes levied for the Commission by the two Counties. The Commission has the authority to sell general obligation bonds to fund approved park acquisition and development projects.

The mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in partnership with Prince George's County residents, is "to provide comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities, and services, that support healthy lifestyles and respond to changing needs within County communities. The Department strives to preserve, enhance, and protect open spaces to enrich the quality of life for the present and future generations in a safe and secure environment."

In Montgomery County, the mission of Montgomery Parks is, "to protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance the demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer a variety of enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places for leisure-time activities."

## II. Demographics

Both Montgomery and Prince George’s counties face demographic and lifestyle shifts that are like those of other evolving communities across the country. Aging baby boomers who remain healthy and active are a growing population; other shifts include increases in non-traditional families, ethnic and racial diversity, and more people with flexible lifestyles and schedules. Park and recreation professionals tailor services to respond to these shifts and effectively and efficiently meet the changing community needs. According to the 2023 County Health Rankings, Montgomery County is ranked number one and Prince George’s County is ranked number 12 out of 23 counties in Maryland. Both counties have a growing Latino/Hispanic population. Prince George’s County has the largest African American population in the region. One-third (33 percent) of Montgomery County residents are foreign born compared to 21 percent in Prince George’s County.

### 2020 Jurisdiction Characteristics

	M-NCPPC	Montgomery County	Prince George’s County
Jurisdiction Area (sq. miles)	976	493	483
Median Income	\$ 103,735	\$ 117,345	\$ 90,124
Total Population	2,012,507	1,057,201	955,306
% Population Under 18	23%	23%	22%
% Population Over 65	15%	16%	15%

## III. Recreation and Leisure Trends

There are many national trends impacting local recreation programming. Here are some that impact our service area:

### Environmental Stewardship and Ethics

Parks and natural areas play a critical role in preserving natural resources and wildlife habitats, protecting clean water and clean air, and conserving land. Well-managed and stewarded natural areas support community well-being, encourage, and preserve biodiversity, and connect people with nature. Stewardship activities also enjoy strong public support.

A thoughtful strategy for placing trails in both regional and conservation-oriented parks can encourage vigorous physical activity for people of all ages, abilities, and cultures while still achieving stewardship objectives. In fact, exposing the public to the joys and wonders of the natural environment is critical to fostering public support for ongoing and expanded stewardship activities.

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## **Demographic Diversity**

The nation is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Many M-NCPPC activities play a valuable role in preserving and maintaining cultural heritages. As the cultural diversity of communities increases, the development of policies, programs and services, and marketing approaches will need to reflect this diversity and provide outreach to different ethno-cultural groups.

## **Inclusion Services**

There is a need to meet the changing recreational and leisure needs of individuals with varying abilities, by using creative means, such as “pop up” programming to promote inclusion for all ages and abilities. Sensory gardens and trails, nature programs, and archaeological digs are examples of ways to increase the inclusion of individuals being diagnosed with autism and autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

## **Mindfulness Body Recreation**

Activities that focus on health and wellness, such as stress management, nutrition, and mind/body connection, are growing programming trends. Classes targeted at cognitive and mental health are important for all age segments. Programming examples include Tai Chi, Yoga, and Meditation.

## **Unstructured Play and Outdoor Fitness**

Walking for exercise is the nation's most popular fitness activity. As a result, unstructured outdoor play has become a strong recreational preference.

## **Nontraditional Sports**

Increased participation in historically nontraditional team sports is a national trend. There is a shift toward greater participation in field hockey, lacrosse, rugby, volleyball, and cricket.

## **Esports**

During the pandemic, playing and watching esports began to accelerate. Esports as a field is now mainstream and even without the presence of spectators, they provide significant opportunities for community engagement. Agencies are considering the creation of dedicated esports spaces and partnering with local academic institutions, tech companies, hardware providers, and gamers to make esports a core program offering.

## **Fitness Swimming and Competition**

There is an increase in both fitness and competitive swimming. In terms of aquatic exercise, the national trend is a decrease in overall aquatic exercise courses, but an increase in enrollment in specialized aquatic exercise courses such as Aqua Spinning, Aqua Pole, and Aqua Zumba.



## **Community Gardening**

Increasing numbers of residents are actively engaged in various gardening and agriculture activities. With more farmers' markets and an interest in community gardens and local food, production has steadily increased. Community gardens strengthen community bonds, provide food, and create recreational opportunities. The Department of Parks and Recreation, in conjunction with ECO City Farms and the Prince George's County Soil Conservation District, hosts an Urban Farm Incubator at Watkins Regional Park. The Department provides infrastructure such as fencing, irrigation, hoop houses, a processing area, and a Farm Manager to oversee the site. Montgomery Parks has 14 community gardens which provide spaces for residents to grow their own food and make positive environmental, economic, and aesthetic impacts on daily lives.

## **Historic Tourism**

Each year, millions of travelers visit America's historic places. Most domestic and international travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling, and those that do stay longer, spend more and travel more often. The District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia region, including Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, contain many historic sites. M-NCPPC sites are engaging in inclusive interpretation/descendant communities that expand the stories being told so our more diverse population feels welcome and feels seen in our spaces.

## **Volunteerism**

Episodic or short-term volunteering has seen greater success than requests for longer-term commitments. This trend has in part been fostered by schools requiring students to meet service-learning requirements.

## **Senior Services**

The growing number of residents over age 55 indicates a need to plan for suitable recreational services and programming for senior citizens and to keep this as a growing M-NCPPC focus. Programming should focus on providing various levels of senior services by target generation, i.e., 50 to 60, 60 to 70, 70 to 80 and 80+. Each 10-year group has separate needs and abilities.

## **Sports Leagues**

According to a study done by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, more children than ever are not playing sports. On the other end of the spectrum, the pressure on parents to place their children on competitive teams with expert coaching and skill development, and the desire for serious programs to compete against one another have made youth sports a lucrative industry, particularly for tournament organizers. Expenses for travel, practice time, and other needs often increase the financial contributions needed from players' families. That culture lends itself to an emphasis on specializing and picking one sport early.

## **Sports Sampling Programs**

As a method of stimulating interest in sports participation in younger children, sports sampling programs are held over a day or a weekend where sports trainers, players, and leaders give youth an opportunity to try out a variety of sports for an hour or two and then move on to another sport.

## IV. Program and Service Determinants

### **Conceptual Foundations of Play, Recreation, and Leisure**

Although program and service determinants continue to evolve, a fundamental of “play” has guided M-NCPPC in its approach to recreation programming. Recreation is difficult to separate from the general concept of “play,” which is usually the term for children’s recreational activity. Since recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure, they are “fun.” The challenge is to attract participants to opportunities that are more than pleasurable. We strive to provide programming for our participants that is meaningful for building skills and habits that will serve them for their entire lives, regardless of age and ability.

### **Constituent Interests and Needs**

Another guiding concept is that recreation is not only good for individuals but also for society. It is important to promote quality of life. M-NCPPC has been focused on providing opportunities to channel recreation activities into civic and volunteer activities that fulfill individual, as well as societal needs.

There are abilities that every person needs, regardless of age, background, or circumstance. We use abilities every day, no matter who we are or what situations we are in. These abilities are supported by commonly used skillsets and mindsets (habits, attitudes, and beliefs). Skillsets prepare and equip us to do something, while mindsets help us to become willing to do something. M-NCPPC designs and facilitates recreational experiences that intentionally connect patrons to specific skillsets and mindsets. Staff are trained and encouraged to plan and implement programming with all of them in mind.


### **Community Opportunities**

Quality recreation services and opportunities are designed to provide children, teens, and families with a broad range of benefits that are coupled with physical, mental, social, and spiritual development and wellbeing. To that end, recreation is an activity in which the community engages for a positive, purposeful end. The scope of M-NCPPC’s recreation offerings provides a wide range of choices in terms of what is offered, how they are structured, and their purpose.

M-NCPPC uses demographic information to ensure that all citizens and visitors have access to parks in or near communities. To reach areas that have limited access to programs, mobile programs bring parks and leisure programs to our citizens. Programs include Sankofa, a mobile museum that tells the history of Prince George’s County, Pop Up Parks, Arts on a Roll, and Fitness in the 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 communities. All programs and events are free, and “play specialists” are onsite to help people discover the amazing things they can do in their local parks.

M-NCPPC is dedicated to serving individuals of all ages with specific attention to the senior, adult, and teen audiences. For example, Montgomery Parks and other stakeholders are collaborating with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), to develop and implement the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Initiative. This program will provide more age friendly park spaces, programs, and amenities throughout the county.

Teen/youth programs, to include arts and nature programs, and volunteer opportunities, continue



to grow and enhance the quality of life for youth. The Department of Parks and Recreation offers free Youth IDs and Senior IDs that encourage youth and seniors to take advantage of community centers and their amenities throughout Prince George's County.

To help overcome economic barriers, M-NCPPC actively pursues low cost or free options for our citizens. Many of our program/class fees are comparable or below the national average. Qualified citizens can apply for fee assistance in both Prince George's and Montgomery Counties.

Scholarship opportunities are also available. In Montgomery County, the Marye Wells-Harley Dream Scholarship provides children ages six to fourteen with an opportunity to attend a Montgomery County Parks summer day camp. Scholarships are awarded based on financial need and they provide children with the opportunity to experience the summer camp of their choice.

### **Agency Philosophy and Goals**

A major program shift in recent years has been from a focus on program opportunities to a benefit-based programming paradigm. Benefit-based programming requires outcome-oriented goals that address social issues and concerns that are viewed as significant by the community. The path to alignment with this philosophy provides specific and measurable outcomes. The framework it articulates has spawned innovation and encouraged us to be a more significant player in the overall development of our participants. For example, recreation programs for youth are designed to accomplish socially desirable goals and objectives.

The Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, develops course descriptions using a benefit-based model: the descriptions explain the benefits to the customer of participation. Benefit-based content marketing answers the patron's questions of "Why should I improve my life?", and "How can I improve my life?", to positively address adverse health challenges, benefit-based content highlights wellness, which is part of our brand identity.

M-NCPPC strives to become a major player in promoting healthy and active lifestyles. This focus on broad health and wellness benefits of recreation, i.e., physical, mental, and environmental, is in response to the increased need to address the elevated levels of obesity in our community. Research studies show that the percentage of overweight children in the nation is growing at an alarming rate. Youth are spending less time exercising outdoors and more time indoors in front of the television, computer, or video game controller. As a result, our program marketing efforts emphasize the many health benefits of recreation, particularly its importance in reducing obesity.

### **Creation of a Constituent-Centered Culture**

Park visitors and program participants play a critical role in the development of our programs and services. We engage our community in several ways, including surveys, friends' groups, focus groups, public meetings, and through ongoing direct interactions with our customers.

The daily interaction that park and facility managers have with park visitors gives us real-time information on customer needs. Whether it is a small adjustment to the location of a park bench or the addition of an ice-skating class to bridge an expressed skill gap between intermediate and advanced levels, managers and staff use customer interaction to drive program and service development. Program participant and park user surveys are distributed and analyzed. The findings can result in the development of new or improved park programs.

## Youth Services

The Department of Parks and Recreation Youth Services Office offers various resources to ensure that youth have access to services, opportunities, and support that engage them in their own development. We provide coaching to sites and encourage them to self-access using the program quality assessment tool to determine which trainings are aligned with their specific growth areas. The desired outcomes for young people are improved through higher quality relationship skills and social-emotional awareness. This positive youth development process prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of services, opportunities, and supports that help them to become socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent to thrive.

# V. Participant Involvement

Outreach methods to inform and involve our residents, include:

- Public and community meeting presentations to regional and local citizen advisory boards
- Email outreach to elected officials, homeowners, and civic associations
- Posters and flyers distributed at frequented locations such as recreation centers, park facilities, and libraries
- Media outreach and advertising
- Social media and marketing outreach via Facebook, X posts, and Facebook advertising


Outreach efforts to engage underserved and harder-to-reach populations include:

- Online Mapping Survey, which is an online tool introduced to map public comments on park usage and needs. This tool creates an interactive method to communicate with staff and other users
- Face-to-face outreach to various organizations and groups at their meetings
- Intercept surveys targeted to reach underrepresented residents. The intercept surveys focus on places frequented daily/weekly, i.e., grocery stores and places of worship. Locations are selected based on data regarding resident race and ethnicity
- Key stakeholders focus groups and interviews
- Printed promotional materials in both Spanish and English
- Sign language interpretation
- In-house translators via our M-NCPPC Language Bank
- Inclusion and access services for individuals with disabilities

The Department of Parks and Recreation solicits views from citizen recreation councils. The councils and their Federation serve as a bridge between the Prince George's Planning Board and the Department of Parks and Recreation leadership in providing feedback and making recommendations on policy, facilities, programming, and service delivery. Participants, including teens, are involved. The councils ensure that participants are given the opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations regarding public policies and programs that affect their future. Through this process they can take a leadership role in creating meaningful change.

## Planning

Both counties use extensive public outreach campaigns to engage residents in helping to influence planning and development decisions. In Montgomery County an informal Trail Users Working Group



helps to identify issues and shape trail planning objectives. This working group is comprised of representatives from park trail stakeholder groups, including Conservation Montgomery, Montgomery Bike Advocates, Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE), Hiking Along, Inc., Park Trail Volunteers, Trail Conservancy, Montgomery County Road Runners Club and Trail Riders of Today (TROT).

The Department of Parks and Recreation purposefully involves the public and community organizations, recognizing them as local experts. There is a mutual understanding that it is essential to work toward and honor community ownership through the processes of research, design, implementation, and construction. We know that the involvement process leads to building trust, establishing relationships, and a greater willingness for ownership and participation among our communities and their leadership. The goals of our involvement efforts have been to continue to provide the basis for the provision of ideal parks, recreation facilities, and programming for Prince Georgians now, and in the future. Over the past few years, our involvement efforts have included community meetings, workshops, and surveys.

### **Sustainability**

M-NCPPC has a [Sustainability Plan for Montgomery County](#) and a [Sustainability Plan for Prince George's County](#). For both counties, sustainability has three pillars - environmental, social, and economic. Prince George's County follows the tenets of One Planet Living, an international framework designed to create a world where everyone, everywhere lives happy, healthy lives within the limits of the planet, leaving space for nature. Montgomery County sees sustainability as more than just "going green." Montgomery County's plan is about implementing practices that promote ecological health, social equity, and economic vitality to maintain thriving communities in Montgomery County and beyond. Each county's sustainability plan can be found in the links below.

### **Conducting Activities**

Some recreation programs depend heavily on volunteers. Partnerships with the Friends of the Agricultural History Farm Park and The Underground Railroad Experience Hikes are volunteer driven. In Montgomery County, the MoCo Epic Bike Festival was developed by partnering community organizations. Volunteer docents serve at numerous historic sites that offer tours or public programs. Riversdale and Surratt House Museums are two notable examples in Prince George's County.

### **Sponsoring Activities**

Both counties have developed foundations to offset costs of recreation programs to the community. Both facilitate the sponsorship of projects, events, and programs, with guidelines for year-round opportunities to encourage efficient coordination rather than having each event/festival solicit its own sponsors. Two new policies guide the revenue-generation of the park assets and programs for the Prince George's County Parks and Recreation. The *Individual (Commemorative and Philanthropic) Naming Rights Policy: # PG-24-01* covers the process of naming Park Assets to recognize an individual without regard to any financial contribution, and individual recognition for significant financial contributions. The *Policy on Naming Rights, Advertising Rights, and Sponsorship Benefits: # PG-24-02* provides revenue to the Commission through Park Assets and Park Programs for the fiscal benefit of users and the community at large.

- <https://www.pgparcs.com/get-involved/donations-sponsorships>
- <https://montgomeryparksfoundation.org>.

## VI. Persons with Disabilities

M-NCPPC has extensive Therapeutic Recreation services and programs for individuals with disabilities. Responsibilities include all aspects of developing, monitoring, implementing, and evaluating the delivery of therapeutic recreation services, ensuring accessibility to individuals with disabilities, and providing extensive support and resource information for community and advocacy groups. Specialized adapted recreation programs, including adapted aquatics and fitness programming, classes, events, after-school programs, trips, social clubs, and more are provided with outreach to individuals with developmental and physical disabilities.

Program Access/Inclusion Services provide reasonable accommodations and/or modifications to ensure access for individuals with disabilities participating in parks and recreation classes and programs. Including them with their peers helps validate that recreation and leisure pursuits are an integral right of everyone. Modifications and accommodations are available on an individual basis. A comprehensive training program is in place to educate internal and external customers about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability issues.

The Montgomery Parks Program Access/Inclusion Services Office coordinates inclusion services to ensure successful inclusion in Montgomery Parks programs. The Office also provides trainings on ADA and Program Access, Behavior Management, Effective Communication with Individuals with Disabilities, Customer Service and Sensitivity Awareness for all employees and volunteers. Montgomery Parks also works with students with learning disabilities in various programs. Students from Ivymount, SEEC, ARC, and Kennedy Krieger are a valuable part of the nature center work programs, providing trail maintenance, garden care, exhibit maintenance, and program preparation as part of their work training programs. Project Search provides students with learning disabilities the opportunity to work in various divisions of Montgomery Parks.

Montgomery Parks offers adaptive activities including Therapeutic Gardening 101 and Sense-sational Summer Camp at Meadowside Nature Center, in addition to providing larger community events that focus on topics such as Autism Acceptance, Mental Health Awareness, and Active Aging Week.

In Prince George's County, the Healthy Minds/Healthy Bodies fitness initiative for military personnel who have returned home with disabilities receive:

- Personal training sessions with a certified trainer experienced in post-rehabilitation exercise
- One-year fitness membership
- One-year membership for a spouse, partner, or friend
- Invitations to optional social events

Training sessions with a certified trainer are tailored to meet the needs of each participant. Fitness memberships and training sessions are coordinated with the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex. Adaptive equipment is a particularly important and popular method to promote inclusion. M-NCPPC continues to enhance its inventory of adaptive equipment that can be used by park guests as they engage in programs and activities.

During the summer of 2021, Program Access collaborated with the Department of Parks and Recreation Park Police Search and Rescue Unit to develop Sensory Bags to use as part of their search and rescue inventory. Sensory bags are kits filled with manipulatives and other sensory-friendly items that people can use to help de-escalate heightened behaviors in anxious situations. First responders carry these bags as they conduct their search and rescue missions in our parks, and beyond. This program expanded in 2022 when an additional 25 sensory bags were distributed to Park Police officers that patrol the parks and other areas.

To support the sensory needs of participants in programs throughout the county, we provide sensory spaces within the program setting as needed and designed to meet their unique and individualized needs.

We have 12'x12' Sensory Tents at our large-scale special events such as Beltway BBQ, Hispanic Festival, Kinderfest, etc. This Sensory Tent is designed as a respite area for attendees to take a break from the festival, regulate themselves, and be able to re-engage in the event they are attending.

We also have an Access on Wheels trailer for large-scale special events designed to ensure access to visitors. This can be physical or sensory based, depending on the event environment.



Montgomery County Parks Sensory Retreat signage



live more, play more  
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# Department of Parks and Recreation Prince George’s County Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP) FY25 - FY30

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# I. Introduction

The Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, manages a comprehensive park system for over one million residents. It is made up of more than 29,000+ acres of developed parkland, open space, stream valleys, and conservation parcels. The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for acquiring land for parks, developing park and recreational facilities, maintaining and policing park property, and conducting a wide array of leisure activities. In addition to the network of parks, County residents also enjoy first-rate recreation programs through community centers, senior centers, arts centers, aquatic facilities, historic properties, including the world's oldest operating airport and aviation museum, therapeutic recreation and senior programs, day camps, and nature programs. There are more than 300 miles of both natural and hard surface trails; hundreds of athletic fields, basketball, and tennis courts; 46 community centers; and other special facilities such as historic structures, museums, and centers designed with space for all generations. The Department has seven program divisions that deliver over 12,000 programs each year.

- Aquatics and Athletic Facilities
- Arts and Cultural Heritage
- Natural and Historic Resources
- Northern Recreation and Leisure Services
- Southern Recreation and Leisure Services
- Special Programs
- Youth and Countywide Sports

## Vision

- Provide stewardship of our County's natural, cultural, and historical resources
- Foster the need of our citizens for recreational pursuits in a leisure environment
- Provide the highest standard of excellence in public service through cooperative partnerships with our diverse community

## Mission

The mission of the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, in partnership with County residents, is to provide comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities, and services that support healthy lifestyles and respond to changing needs within County communities. The Department strives to preserve, enhance, and protect open spaces to enrich the quality of life for the present and future generations in a safe and secure environment.

## Values

- Leadership and Innovation: Visionary leadership and innovation to achieve excellence
- Sustainability: Responsibly balancing resources to meet the environmental, social, and economic needs of today and tomorrow
- Preservation of Open Space: Open lands for enjoyment and preservation
- Quality: Maintenance of quality services and facilities
- Social Equity: Distribution of resources to meet a variety of community needs and interests
- Diversity: Celebration of and responsiveness to a diverse community
- Healthy Communities: Awareness and active participation
- Accessibility & Safety: Accessible and safe places that encourage participation

## Prince George's County, Maryland

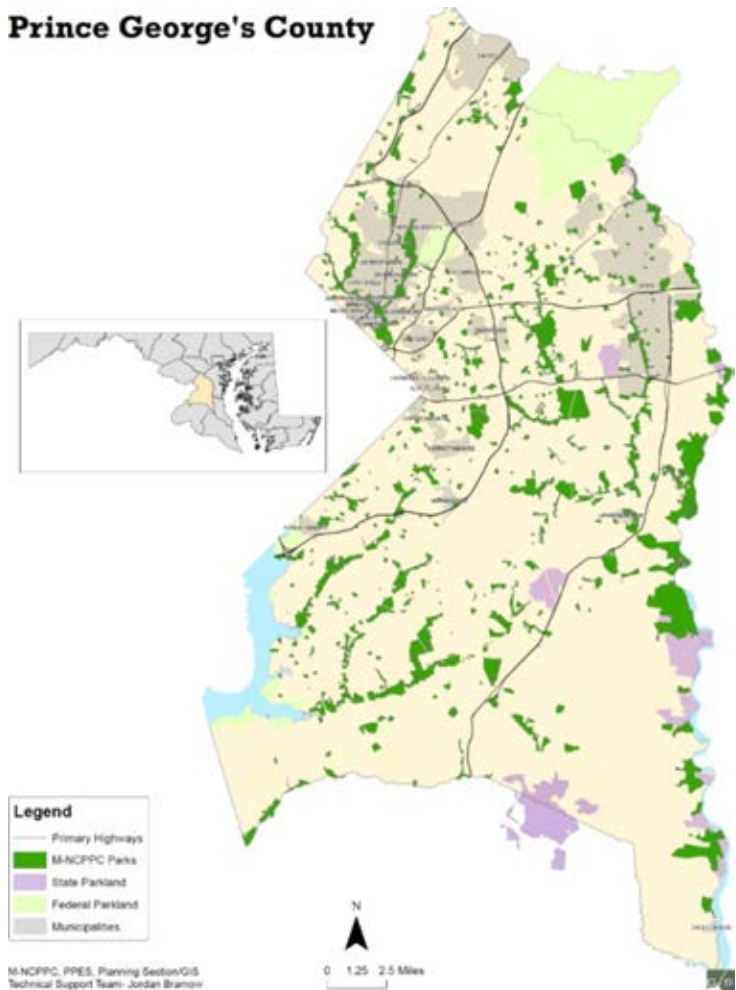
With almost 1 million residents and 498 square miles of land, Prince George's County is a large diverse jurisdiction that includes rural, suburban, and urban areas. The County has an even mix of youth, families, active adults, and seniors, with the median age in Prince George's County being 37.1 years. In 2022 the median household income in Prince George's County was \$97, 935, yet 9.58% of the population lives below the poverty line and 40.1% of students are eligible for free or reduced meals in public schools.

Prince George's County park and recreational amenities, including community parks, regional parks, museums, ice rinks, athletic and aquatic facilities, and approximately 340 miles of trails, contribute significantly to our residents' quality of life. Prince George's County strives to provide the best park experience possible. We recognize the importance of providing residents with safe and accessible spaces and with outlets for healthy recreational activities.

Department of Parks and Recreation,  
Prince George's County Organization  
Chart

[PARK and REC Org Chart Updated 8-19-2024.pptx](#)

### Prince George's County



## II. Goals and Objectives

### Aquatics and Athletic Facilities (AAFD)

**Aquatics** - Increase Learn to Swim program offerings to reach 12,000 participants by FY28. This growth will provide additional opportunities for County residents and neighbors to participate in swim lessons.

**Fitness** - Increase the percentage of patrons utilizing Group Fitness Classes by 25% from 16,000 in FY23 to 20,000 in FY28, to ensure that more patrons are receiving an effective workout.

**Gymnastics** - Increase boys' participation in competitive gymnastics by 65% from 15 in FY23 to 25 by FY28 to promote opportunities for County youth to participate in a non-traditional sport.

**Golf** - Increase golf participation in Prince George's County by 20%, increasing from 71,000 participants in FY23 to 85,200 in FY28.

**Ice Skating** - Expand the availability of advanced skating classes by 55% by FY28 in comparison to programming levels in FY23.

**Tennis** - Increase the number of participants in AAFD tennis courses to 1,000 participants in each season by FY30.

**Trap and Skeet** - Research a more efficient tracking system for customer verification and usage, improve marketing, and reduce registration time for visitors by the start of FY28.

### Arts and Cultural Heritage Division (ACHD)

**Arts Education** - Increase participation in arts education programs by 10% from 4,000 in FY23 to 4,400 by FY28.

**Note: Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.)**

**Artistic Innovation** - By FY29, expand connectivity to innovative arts concepts to help identify three major art trends.

**Diverse Cultural Programming** - Increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in arts program offerings by developing three culturally focused programs by FY28.

**Teen Programming Expansion** - Develop and expand signature arts programs related to the teen population by 20% from 10 in FY23 to 12 in FY25.

### Natural and Historic Resources Division (NHRD)

**Student Programs** - Increase student programs through curriculum-based nature and history programs by 15% from FY24 to FY28.

**Program Offering** - Support Departmental (other Divisions) events and programs, to increase programmatic offerings by 15% from FY25 to FY28.

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## Northern Recreation and Leisure Services Division (NRLS)

**Pre-school and Kids Care** - Community Centers in NRLS will increase their Pre-school and Kids Care registrations by 20% from 298 in 2022/2023 school year to 357 by 2025/2026 school year.

**Program Delivery Rate** - By FY26, community centers in NRLS will increase the program delivery rate by 15%, based on baseline program delivery rate determined in FY24.

**Winter Programs** - By FY27, NRLS will develop two new large-scale outdoor winter programs to enhance the outdoor seasonal experience at Watkins Regional Park.

## Southern Recreation and Leisure Services Division (SRLS)

**Participation** - Increase participation in recreational programs by 20% by the end of FY30 compared to the baseline in FY25.

**Accessibility and Maintenance** - By the end of FY30, improve facility accessibility and maintenance to achieve a 20% increase in the average facility user satisfaction score, as measured through annual surveys.

## Special Programs Division (SPD)

**Disability Services** - Complete and publish the Disability Services Action Plan to guide section goals and objectives for the next five years, FY25-30.

**Health and Wellness** - By the end of FY25, develop and implement Health & Wellness programming into six of the Department's Kid's Care after-school sites.

**Senior Services** - By FY26, evaluate 75% of all Senior Services programs (classes, programs, trips, and special events).

**Youth Services** - Maintain the 11,287 active Youth ID accounts at the start of FY25 and increase Youth ID Card sales by 10% by the end of FY25, and 5% in subsequent years FY26-FY27

## Youth and Countywide Sports Division (YCSD)

**Girls Initiatives** - By the end of FY25, girls' sports program offerings will increase to reach 1,000 participants.

**Partnerships** - Increase our current partnerships with local colleges, professional and national sports groups, businesses, and other organizations to eight by the end of FY26. Currently the number stands at six.

**Joint Use of Athletic Spaces** - Create a one-stop shop for the public to reserve indoor and outdoor field/gym spaces at schools, parks, and recreation facilities/fields.

**Coaches** - Create a countywide coaches' registration portal to include YCSD, Prince George's County Boys' and Girls' Clubs (PGCBGC), and other Prince George's County providers by FY28.

**Expanded Programming** - Increase YCSD offerings to include more year-round programming (i.e., spring flag football, summer basketball) and non-traditional sports (i.e., cricket, volleyball) by FY29.

**Sports Delivery Model** - The YCSD Team will shift/develop and implement future programming to decrease duplications in oversaturated areas and fill gaps in programming to increase services in underserved areas by FY30.

## III. Fees and Cost Recovery

### **Discussion:**

The Department of Parks and Recreation offers thousands of varied programs and services in its hundreds of staffed and unstaffed facilities, and within the park system. Though some are offered at no cost to participants, most require at least a nominal fee. Those thousands of fees are defined by recreation programmers and program managers and vetted by Assistant Division Chiefs. Some of those fees must also be approved by the Deputy Directors and the Director to ensure that the Department is adhering to its mission of providing “comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities, and services which respond to changing needs within our communities.”

### **Purpose/Policy:**

Consistent with the Department’s goals to promote social equity and program participation by all individuals, it is the Department’s policy to update its standard fees and charges annually. Further, it is the policy of the Department to set fees in relation to market rates for similar programs and update them to keep up with changes in the local economy and inflation. To that end, the following directive establishes the policies and procedures to ensure the consistent application of the policy.

### **Scope and Applicability:**

Fees to be included are those applicable to a wide range of customers, facilities, and programmers, and for which the agency needs to mandate consistency for administrative organization and social equity. These offerings include little to no variation in program type/quality/length regardless of location.

### **Current Fees Include:**

- Community center memberships (CC ID and fitness passes), to include branded options for youth and seniors (M-NCPPC Youth ID and M-NCPPC Senior ID)
- Community center rental fees for private, non-profit agency, and partner group use
- Marquee programs
- Summer day camps, summer playgrounds, and teen centers
- Inter-center sports leagues
- School-age childcare programs
- Swim lessons

There are other fees being used across the Department that are not represented in the Fees & Charges document. They may apply only to specific facilities and may vary based on several other factors. These fees are monitored instead for consistency at the division’s Assistant Division Chief level. All Department of Parks and Recreation professionals involved in program planning and marketing, both at facilities and in the division offices, are expected to follow this directive.

### **Establishing and Updating Fee and Charges Guidelines:**

- Budget managers work with division staff to analyze program data, inflation, and market prices to re-evaluate the existing Fees & Charges chart, identify fee changes needed for the coming year, and evaluate their impact on the Department of Parks and Recreation's revenue and cost goals.
- Fee change recommendations are communicated to the Customer Service Help Desk where a proposed fee chart is created and shared with the Budget Manager. The Budget Manager and the Deputy Director of Administration and Development then approve the document and bring it before the Director for review and approval. After it is approved, the chart returns to the Help Desk for entry into registration software. Information is shared with the Public Affairs & Customer Engagement Division to make any relevant changes to publications, websites, and facility fees & charges posters. The document is then emailed to staff and posted to the Department of Parks and Recreation's intranet.

### **Forms and Documentation of Fees & Charges:**

- The Fees & Charges chart is a one-page Excel document maintained by the Customer Service Help Desk. It lists fees in three categories:
  - Memberships
  - Rentals
  - Courses

It also defines the duration for which the fee is valid, population served, and both resident and non-resident pricing for each fee.

### **Approval of Fees & Charges:**

After internal approval by the Department, the Fees & Charges chart must be approved by the Director.

- Timeline for Updating Fees & Charges:


The new Fees & Charges chart typically becomes effective on May 1st of each year. To meet this deadline, the Director must review the information no later than the first week of April. Therefore, all proposed documents must be finalized by the Help Desk and budget team in early March. To meet this deadline, fee changes must be submitted by each division no later than February 1st of each year.

### **Implementation of Fees & Charges:**

All fees implemented in accordance with this directive are effective until the next document is approved. All programs must operate in accordance with the approved fees. Communication is sent to recreation staff via email before the May 1st effective date each year.

### **Cost Recovery - Programs:**

The Department of Parks and Recreation developed a revised Cost Recovery philosophy in 2020. The revised approach and philosophy focused on realigning target cost recovery percentages based on funding sources, cost of service, and level of service to the community. The approach resulted in a revised Stop Light model framework.



The new Stop Light 2.0 model reclassifies recreation programs, rental uses, and event activities based on four types of services offered. Under the revised cost recovery philosophy, services are categorized as basic public services, special public services, private benefit services, and enterprise services.

**Direct Costs** include all service and product expenses related to the day of service delivery from an operational perspective. Such a cost would not exist without the program or service offered, including human capital and facility space. Direct costs are shared cost of services between direct recipients of service and taxpayer investments.

**Overhead costs** are the administrative budget planning, coordination, oversight, and evaluation of the services provided. Such services are specific to addressing community demands and needs. Overhead costs are covered primarily under taxpayer investments.

Departmental **Indirect Costs** are the complimentary service cost to support both general operations and services rendered to the community. These indirect costs would exist without any one specific service. Indirect costs are intended to be well managed and covered by taxpayer investment.

The Program and Facility Pricing Model represents all the categories of services, programs, and facility use currently provided by the Department of Parks and Recreation. This model is based on the degree of community benefit, community expectation and enrollment, and the structure for which benefits are obtained. Program services are placed within a Stop Light Model six-tier system and a cost recovery range is assigned to that tier. The cost recovery range is assigned minimum cost percentages to recover direct, overhead, and indirect cost.

The Program Stop Light Cost Recovery model 2.0 is divided into six categories. The categories include:

- Community Based
- Beginner Skill Based
- Life Skills and Enrichment
- Intermediate Skill Based
- Special Activities and Events
- Advanced Skill Based

Conceptually, the base level is the foundation of the table and represents the core mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation system. The six base levels are outlined below.

### **TIER ONE (1G): COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (30% CR)**

Community benefit programs. These programs and services are completely community benefit. These programs are targeted to recover 0-30% on the recommendation of the committee. Some of these services may be appropriate for funding sources such as grants, donations, and volunteers.

- **Community-wide events typically organized by Department staff and offered annually.**
- **Activity with no instructed program**, that does not require registration and is not monitored by agency staff/volunteer supervision.

**Community mandated services** provide a social, wellness, health, and/or safety benefit, and are typically offered for free, a nominal price or donation, and may be provided through the efforts of other outside organizations at no cost to the Department.

- **Grant programs** delivered by Department staff to individuals and groups to provide low-cost events, programs, and services to the community.
- **Natural resource protection/management programs** such as the environmental services (clean air, clean water, storm water, flood plain conservation areas, urban forest protection, hazardous trees, and weed management programs) are provided for free.
- **Inclusion services** provide reasonable modifications to policies, programs, and procedures to accommodate people with disabilities. Inclusion services are intended to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA federal mandate). This includes plan reviews for barrier-free access and regulatory compliance.
- **Self-directed activities** do not require supervision and are health- and educational-based (i.e., self-guided outdoor fitness circuit, walking groups, etc.).

### **TIER TWO (2G): BEGINNER SKILLBASED PROGRAMS (40% CR)**

**Entry level programs and classes.** These programs have considerable community benefit. These programs and services are targeted to recover 40% cost recovery based on the recommendation of the committee. Some of these services may be appropriate for use of funding sources such as grants, donations, and volunteers, like 1G programs. Drop-in programming such as open gym or open/free swim; senior activity rooms, computer labs, and open field days.

**Beginner-based programming** that introduces participants to an activity.

### **TIER THREE (3Y): LIFE SKILL AND ENRICHMENT BASED PROGRAMS (50% CR)**

**Life-skill development programs.** These programs and services provide a balance of community and individual benefit and are primarily supported by a combination of taxes and user fees at the 50% cost recovery level of true costs (both direct and indirect costs). These programs help reinforce skills for everyday living.

- **Life skill and enrichment-based activities such as** licensed childcare, preschool programs, summer day camps, and youth development programs.
- **Youth camps monitored in a structure for half-day and full-day programs** which focus on a single physical, creative, or enrichment activity and/or weekly themes and are typically pre-registered and offered in a weekly or bi-weekly session.
- **Natural resource education** programs that are scheduled for youth for an outdoor experience, with historical, cultural, or environmental programs/classes that may or may not involve school curriculum, which is offered for a price to private or public groups. This would include outdoor education programs.



#### **TIER FOUR (4Y): INTERMEDIATE SKILL-BASED PROGRAMS (60% CR)**

**Middle range skill-based programs.** These programs include mixed skill level programs, recreation sports leagues, and all programs classified as “intermediate” or at least have an advanced program available. All programs are operated at the 60% cost recovery level of true costs (both direct and indirect).

- **Intermediate based programs** that can include classes, programs, workshops, and clinics.
- **Sports leagues** regardless of whether they are indoors or outdoors.
- **When not labeled “intermediate,”** program areas that have at least a lower level of skill requirement and a more advanced offering available for users.

#### **TIER FIVE (5R): SPECIALTY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS (70% CR)**

**More individual-based programs.** These programs have high individual benefits and should incur minimal subsidy in the form of tax dollars and have a cost recovery goal of 70%.

- **“Special events” versus “community events,”** meaning the event caters to a narrower community market and goes beyond a “normal” community expectation.
- **Specialty camps** that have a specific niche or a narrower/advanced focus.

#### **TIER SIX (6R): ADVANCED SKILL-BASED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (80% CR)**

The highest level of a programmatic activity. These programs include activities with an extremely high individual focus. The cost recovery level should be at least 80% of full cost recovery.

- **Private/semi-private lessons** arranged for individuals with a specific instructor and/or time.
- **Advanced competition sports** leagues and tournaments scheduled as a one-time sporting and/or multi-game event for various age groups organized or managed by the Department. The games are typically officiated and scored, providing a team experience for participants with the intent of playing a game/match to win or to compete.
- **All programs labeled as “advanced,”** or the highest level offered if there is a range of skill level programs offered for the same program activity/area.

#### **Cost Recovery - Facilities**

The following facility model was completed by the pricing policy project team. The model represents all categories of facility services currently provided by the Department. The model is based on the degree of community benefit, community expectation, and enrollment. Services deemed to benefit individuals are assigned a larger cost recovery goal. Those deemed to be a benefit to the community will have a minimal to zero cost recovery goal. Each Department program or service program will be placed within the six-tier system and a cost recovery range assigned to that tier.

- **Non-Programmed, Non-Monitored Access (0% CR):** Unreserved outdoor spaces, community meeting sites, polling sites, and picnic grounds fall into this category.
- **Monitored Access (90% CR):** Drop-in gymnasium activities, childcare services, and membership management and control.
- **Rentals (Public) (100% CR):** Access to reservable spaces that provide exclusive use of a campground space, picnic pavilion, indoor program space, parking space, and special event access to parks and trails for exclusive use.
- **Public (Not for profit) (100+% CR):** Access to campgrounds, rental spaces in facilities, exclusive use of spaces for non-profit revenue gain.

- **Concession, Vending and Leases (100+% CR):** Facility and beverage sales spaces for private gain including merchandise sales and tenant leases.
- **For Profit Rentals (100+% CR):** Individual or corporate-based rentals; services that have a profit center base.

### **TIER ONE (7G): NON-PROGRAM, NON-MONITORED ACCESS (0% CR)**

**High community expectation services.** These activities are associated with essential/core recreation park and facility access. In other words, these services have the most community expectation associated with them. Cost recovery for these services is expected at 0% and they are expected to be subsidized with public tax dollars.

- **Historic cultural amenities** that protect and maintain the historic features within the County.
- **Public safety, rules, and regulations** that involve the maintenance of public safety, facility, and resource protection within County boundaries, properties, and facilities.
- **General park, trail, and facility access** to major system amenities.
- **All mandated** services as outlined by ordinance, law, statute, or other mandate.

### **TIER TWO (8Y): MONITORED ACCESS (90% CR)**

**Staff oversight is expected.** These services refer to all activities associated with staff oversight and/or presence on-site. These activities are separate from programs that can be classified on the program Stop Light Model. The cost recovery goal is 90% for these services.

- **Fee or membership-based monitored park/facility usage** such as drop-in use of park/facility activity that is non-registered and may or may not be instructed but is monitored by agency staff/volunteer supervision and requires payment of a fee or purchase of a membership before usage. This would include golf green fees, driving ranges, batting cages, gymnasiums, etc.
- **Permit services for non-rental permits** issued to businesses or individual groups for non-exclusive use of Department property such as a special activity permit, disc golf event, fishing event, filming/photography rights on Department property, parking, and block party permits.

### **TIER THREE (9R): RENTALS (PUBLIC) (100% CR)**

**Exclusive use of facilities and/or amenities.** These services refer to all activities associated with exclusive use of M-NCPPC-owned property, facilities, and/or amenities by government agencies and/or the public. The cost recovery goal is 100% for these services.

**Exclusive use permits and rentals** by government agencies and affiliates for exclusive use of spaces and facilities on a one-time or ongoing basis. Additionally, exclusive use permits and rentals by a member of the public fall into this category.

### **TIER FOUR (10R): RENTALS (NON-PROFIT) (AT LEAST 100% CR)**

Exclusive use of facilities and/or amenities. These services refer to all activities associated with exclusive use of M-NCPPC-owned property, facilities, and/or amenities by non-profit affiliations. The cost recovery goal is at least 100% for these services.

- **Non-profit/civic rentals** for exclusive use of spaces and facilities on a one-time or on-going basis by a 501(c)3 or (c)4 non-profit/civic agency for a non-fundraising or admission event or activity. These could include neighborhood associations and not for profit organization events.

### **TIER FIVE (11R): CONCESSIONS, VENDING, AND LEASES (AT LEAST 100% CR)**

Contracted or private services. These services refer to any in-house or contracted services that provide an exclusive individual benefit. All services are expected to achieve at least 100% cost recovery of total costs.

- **Food and vending sales** such as facility concessions and food trucks.
- **Tenant leases** refer to the long-term exclusive use of spaces and facilities for on-going or multiple periods by a private individual or group.
- **Merchandise sales** such as clothing, accessories, or any other equipment that is for retail purposes.

### **TIER SIX (12R): RENTALS (FOR PROFIT) (AT LEAST 100% CR)**

**The highest exclusive use for facilities and/or amenities.** These services refer to all activities associated with exclusive use of M-NCPPC-owned property, facilities, and/or amenities and associated with a for-profit business or enterprise. The highest cost recovery is associated with this tier and at least 100% cost recovery is expected for these services.

- **Exclusive user permits for a private/for-profit rental** for a one-time event by a group or for-profit business. This would include tournament use of sports fields for association or team gain, race permits, private room rentals for weddings, reunions, youth parties, tennis court permits, shelter permits, boat slips and moorings, and special events held on Department property.
- **Equipment rentals** for various Department-owned equipment available to renters for exclusive use. This would include banquet chairs/tables, audio/video equipment, boats, sports equipment, climbing walls, stage van, hay- wagon, golf clubs, golf carts, etc.

### **Yearly Fee Assistance**

The Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County (the Department), recognizes that some residents are financially unable to participate in the designated activities and programs offered at our fee-based facilities. It is the policy of the Department to annually update fee assistance guidelines and to ensure that fee assistance is provided consistently and without bias to all eligible individuals.

The Department provides fee assistance according to the Federal Poverty Guidelines and reduces eligible fees by 20%, 50%, 70%, and 90%, based on verified income and family size. Fee assistance may be used for all designated activities and programs except:

- Facility and equipment rentals (including community center meeting rooms, birthday parties, studio space, tennis/racquetball courts, park structures, picnic kits, etc.)
- Sports team registrations and user fees
- Drop-in admissions, daily visits, and ticketed events
- Trips and excursions
- Amusement park tickets
- Programs sponsored by Recreation Councils or Boys & Girls Clubs
- Summer Playgrounds and Teen Centers
- Fees for materials, supplies, and equipment for associated programs
- Programs where the total fee does not exceed \$35
- Employee child-care programs

Forms and Documentation to Request Fee Assistance:

- The application can be found on <https://www.pgparcs.com/activities-events/fee-assistance-scholarships>.
- Approvals for fee assistance are valid for one year from the approval date.

Scholarship opportunities for summer camps are made available in January. Thanks to the generous support from our community, the Department of Parks and Recreation is offering unique camp experiences through the Parks and Recreation Foundation's Kids to Camp Scholarship.

## IV. Divisional Action Plans

### Aquatics and Athletic Facilities (AAFD)

**Aquatics** - Increase Learn to Swim program offerings to reach 12,000 participants by FY28. This growth will provide additional opportunities for County residents and neighbors to participate in swim lessons.

**Action Plan:**

- The aquatics team will strategically restructure the swim lesson program to allow more lessons to be offered with current facility access.
- The Aquatic Recruitment Task Force will increase Water Safety Instructor recruitment, and the Safety and Compliance team will increase access to certification courses to meet the need for new instructors.
- Based on historical registration and waitlist data, by January 2025 the Countywide Aquatics Coordinator will set incremental facility-specific goals to increase swim lesson opportunities to meet the goal in FY28.

**Fitness** - Increase the percentage of patrons utilizing Group Fitness Classes by 25% from 16,000 in FY23 to 20,000 in FY28, to ensure that more patrons are receiving an effective workout.

**Action Plan:**

- Fitness Managers will survey current patrons and residents not currently using fitness facilities to determine the classes they want offered.
- Fitness Managers will monitor the programs being offered by competitors to ensure that M-NCPPC program offerings are competitive and responsive to trends.
- Fitness Managers will assess and report progress quarterly. Based on the outcomes, necessary adjustments will be made to achieve the goal.



Prince George's County Healthy Trails program

**Gymnastics** - Increase boys' participation in competitive gymnastics by 65% from 15 in FY23 to 25 by FY28 to promote opportunities for County youth to participate in a non-traditional sport.

**Action Plan:**

- By FY26 Gymnastics Managers will focus on developing a recruitment, hiring, and training plan to attract and develop qualified coaches for the Competitive Teams and Recreation Programs, creating an improved feeder system for athletes to move through the program.
- By FY28 Gymnastics Managers will increase promotion and development of Boys Pre-Team program opportunities for boys ages 4-5 that show flexibility, strength, and courage.
- By FY27, the Gymnastics management team will work with gymnasts who have graduated from M-NCPPC programs to promote gymnastics by offering workshops and clinics that provide insight into their individual paths, and how the sport has improved their lives.

**Golf** - Increase golf participation in Prince George's County by 20%, increasing from 71,000 participants in FY23 to 85,200 in FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- The Golf Team will establish a more robust tee time booking platform to achieve greater efficiency with setting tee times.
- Golf Team will partner with the Public Affairs and Community Engagement Division (PACE) to implement a thorough marketing plan to begin in FY25.
- Beginning in FY25, Golf Managers at all three properties will increase efforts to identify instructors to expand the capacity to offer a wide range of classes and clinics that will cater to players of all skill levels and experience.

**Ice Skating** - Expand the availability of advanced skating classes by 55% by FY28 in comparison to programming levels in FY23.

**Action Plan:**

- In FY25, Facility Managers will begin recruiting and training coaches with the experience to coach advanced skating classes.
- By Fall 2026, Facility Managers will expand program offerings by creating 10 new advanced skating courses.
- By Fall 2026, Facility Managers will enhance student retention by providing a combination of ice and off ice (dryland) classes, and through the introduction of a parental education program that underscores the benefits of skating.

**Tennis** - Increase the number of participants in AAFD tennis courses to 1,000 participants in each season by FY30.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility and Venue Managers will work closely to recruit and hire additional coaches through relationships with local schools, businesses, and churches. Work with the United States Tennis Association (USTA) and Professional Tennis Registry (PTR) partners to offer coaching clinics and onsite training opportunities for those interested.
- Each Tennis Facility Manager will expand programming opportunities by increasing the number of course offerings, utilizing outdoor courts, and targeting new demographics. For example, adding an additional 50 courses per season by FY30 and expanding the Homeschool Course Curriculum to all three of our tennis facilities.
- Tennis Unit Manager will work with tennis teams to develop and implement a strategic marketing campaign that leans heavily on community outreach to increase awareness of the Department’s Tennis Program, thus increasing participation. For example, offering mobile Tennis opportunities to local schools and community events to build relationships and recruit participants to the facilities.



Children at an outdoor tennis class

**Trap and Skeet** - Research a more efficient tracking system for customer verification and usage, improve marketing, and reduce registration time for visitors by the start of FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- By Spring 2025, Facility Managers will complete research on available software that will capture contact information by scanning the back of a driver's license. This will allow the management team to gather data on who is attending the tournament or event. It will be especially useful to contact in an emergency or incident. Lastly, it will provide a mechanism to store and retrieve signed waivers.
- Facility Managers will work with the Management Services and Information Technology Services Divisions to ensure the compatibility and feasibility of selected software.
- Facility Managers will develop a training manual for all facility and tournament staff that will provide instructions on setup, downloading reports, and saving the information.

## Arts and Cultural Heritage Division (ACHD)

**Arts Education** - Increase participation in arts education programs by- 10% from 4,000 in FY23 to 4,400 by FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility Managers and Arts Specialists will meet twice a year with K-12 school administrators and art educators to strengthen the connection between schools and the arts in a recreation setting.
- Facility Managers and Arts Specialists will develop art specific programming geared toward partnered schools.
- Facility Managers and Arts Specialists will create curriculum-driven programs and collaborate with school administrators and teachers for their valuable guidance and support.

**Note: Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.)**

**Artistic Innovation** - By 2028, expand connectivity to innovative arts concepts to help identify three major art trends.

**Action Plan:**

- Countywide Arts Coordinators will research technological innovations within the arts, as indicated by current industry standards.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will develop art opportunities that incorporate the current trends within the art industry.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will expand collaboration with community partners.
- Division Chief will invest in the appropriate resources that will fund these current trends. Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming within the Division by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.

**Diverse Cultural Programming** - Increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in arts program offerings by developing three culturally focused programs by FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- Countywide Arts Coordinators will determine demographic measures within the County to determine programming needs.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will develop increased arts programming with the expanding Hispanic population through the recruitment of bilingual instructors.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will expand collaboration with community partners.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.

**Teen Programming Expansion** - Develop and expand signature arts programs related to the teen population by 20% from 10 in FY23 to 12 in FY25.

**Action Plan:**

- Countywide Arts Coordinators will increase teen arts internships that promote professional training and development.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will establish teen focus groups that extract the wants and needs related to teen arts programming.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will increase more on-the-job learning experiences and research and establish ACHD as a Youth Apprenticeship- Maryland Apprenticeship Program (MATP) employment site.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming within the Division by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.

**Diverse Cultural Programming -**

Increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in arts program offerings by developing three culturally focused programs by FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- Countywide Arts Coordinators will determine demographic measures within the County to determine programming needs.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will develop increased arts programming with the expanding Hispanic population through the recruitment of bilingual instructors.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will expand collaboration with community partners.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.



Montpelier Arts Center exterior

**Teen Programming Expansion** - Develop and expand signature arts programs related to the teen population by 20% from 10 in FY23 to 12 in FY25.

**Action Plan:**

- Countywide Arts Coordinators will increase teen arts internships that promote professional training and development.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will establish teen focus groups that extract the wants and needs related to teen arts programming.
- Countywide Arts Coordinators will increase more on-the-job learning experiences and research and establish ACHD as a Youth Apprenticeship- Maryland Apprenticeship Program (MATP) employment site.
- Assistant Division Chiefs will improve marketing and promotion efforts for all arts programming within the Division by meeting quarterly with the PACE Division.



## Natural and Historic Resources Division (NHRD)

**Student Programs** - Increase student programs through curriculum-based nature and history programs by 15% from FY24 to FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility Managers will establish a baseline number of student programs from FY24.
- By FY25, Facility Managers & staff will ensure student programs will be aligned with state and/or County curriculum.
- By FY25, the Communications and Marketing Coordinator and the Facility Managers will develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan to include a field trip guide.

**Program Offering** - Support Departmental (other Divisions) events and programs, to increase programmatic offerings by 15% from FY25 to FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- By FY25, Facility Managers will establish a baseline number of programmatic offerings through support of Departmental programs.
- By FY26, the Communications and Marketing Coordinator and Facility Managers will develop and implement an internal marketing plan to promote Natural and Historic Resources Division offerings.

## Northern Recreation and Leisure Services Division (NRLS)

**Preschool and Kids Care** - Community Centers in NRLS will increase their Preschool and Kids Care registrations by 20% from 298 in 2022/2023 school year to 357 by 2025/2026 school year.

**Action Plan:**

- NRLS will create part-time career positions for each facility that offers a Preschool or Kids Care program. This position will work solely with the childcare program(s).
- Once hired, they will work with the Facility Manager and Regional Manager to create a marketing and outreach strategy that is specific to their community and facility.
- NRLS will work with the Executive Leadership Team on strengthening the partnership with the Board of Education (BOE) Transportation office, to assist with the transportation needs of families. Transportation is a barrier to participation.

**Program Delivery Rate** - By FY26, community centers in NRLS will increase the program delivery rate by 15%, based on baseline program delivery rate determined in FY24.

**Action Plan:**

- NRLS will train staff on program lifecycle.
- NRLS will focus on professional training geared toward innovative programming.
- NRLS will develop processes to eliminate rollover of stale classes.
- NRLS will increase program delivery rate by 5% in FY25; 5 more % by FY26 and 5 more % by 2027.

**Winter Programs** - By FY27, NRLS will develop two new large-scale outdoor winter programs to enhance the outdoor seasonal experience at Watkins Regional Park.

**Action Plan:**

- Designate a portion of funds to be used specifically for newly developed programs
- Research the possibility of adding outdoor ice rink, outdoor rentals and “Acoustic & Ales” concerts.
- Organize meetings with residents who wish to hold more personal events in the park, such as baby reveals, engagements, and wedding photo shoots.



Festival of Lights holiday display

## Southern Recreation and Leisure Services Division (SRLS)

**Participation** - Increase participation in recreational programs by 20% by the end of FY30 compared to the baseline in FY25.

**Action Plan:**

- Division Chief will allocate dedicated Division funding for marketing and outreach resources, offer diverse program options, and improve program quality.
- Assistant Chiefs or designees will work with PACE to implement targeted marketing campaigns to reach underserved populations and increase program awareness.
- The Course Coordination Unit will gather feedback quarterly from program participants and make improvements based on suggestions.



Children at a playground

**Accessibility and Maintenance** - By the end of FY30, improve facility accessibility and maintenance to achieve a 20% increase in the average facility user satisfaction score, as measured through annual surveys.

**Action Plan:**

- Division Chief, in collaboration with Assistant Chiefs, will invest in facility upgrades, implement a regular maintenance schedule, and ensure compliance with ADA accessibility standards.
- By the end of FY25, Assistant Chiefs, in collaboration with other divisions, will conduct a comprehensive assessment of all facilities to identify areas for improvement and prioritize upgrades/renovations.
- Facility Managers, with support from Division leadership, will solicit user feedback annually through surveys. They will then act on the feedback to make necessary improvements.

## Special Programs Division (SPD)

**Disability Services** - Complete and publish the Disability Services Action Plan to guide section goals and objectives for the next five years, FY25-30.

**Action Plan:**

- By Fall FY25, Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Divisional Manager and TR Coordinators will identify best practices and strategic initiatives for therapeutic recreation and program access/inclusion services and develop a draft Action Plan.
- Countywide TR Coordinator and TR Training and Outreach team will work with PACE Division to solicit public and internal shareholders input on the draft Action Plan via workshops and public forums held during Winter/Spring FY25.
- By Summer FY26, TR Divisional Manager to work with ADA Coordinator, PACE Division, and Enterprise Asset Management Manager (EAM) to inventory the Department's accessible amenities.
- TR Divisional Manager will work with Division Chief and Recreation and Leisure Services (RLS) Deputy Director to present, and work toward the adoption, print/development of the online webpage with PACE Division and distribute the final Disability Services Action Plan by FY26, while working extensively with the PACE Division on a yearlong public awareness campaign.

**Health and Wellness** - By the end of FY25, develop and implement Health & Wellness programming into six of the Department's Kid's Care after-school sites.

**Action Plan:**

- By Fall FY25, the Health & Wellness Coordinator will hire a Health & Wellness Specialist III to oversee youth Health & Wellness programs.
- Once hired, the Health & Wellness Specialist will research and either create new programming, or obtain and structure program information (curriculum, training, etc.) for an already existing Health & Wellness program for youth and present a plan to Executive Leadership Team by Summer FY25.
- The Health & Wellness Specialist will work with a Childcare Coordinator to pilot programming at two sites (one in the Northern Region and one in the Southern) in Fall FY25, growing to six sites (three in the Northern Region and three in the Southern) by the end of the 2024/2025 school year.
- By Spring 2025, the Health & Wellness Specialist will work with the Childcare Coordinator/Childcare Committee on developing "Try it!" travel kits and staff training as a complement to the pilot program for use by other youth programs (after school, out of school time).

**Senior Services** - By FY26, evaluate 75% of all Senior Services programs (classes, programs, trips, and special events).

**Action Plan:**

- Assistant Chief/Senior Services will work with Parks Direct/Help Desk, and ITS (technology) to determine best practices for data collection and tabulation for Summer FY25.
- Division Chief/Senior Services will allocate dedicated division funding resources to develop tools and secure technology to implement surveys for FY25.
- Assistant Chief/Senior Services will work with Parks Direct/Help Desk and the Special Projects Division to develop evaluation tools, and test/adjust as needed for Summer/Fall FY25.
- Assistant Chief/Senior Services will work with Parks Direct/Help Desk to develop and deliver training to program staff on how to best encourage seniors to complete event/class surveys.
- Senior Activity Center Facility Managers will implement an evaluation tool upon completion of a special event, class session, trip, or after a Countywide event, starting in Fall/Winter FY25.
- Division Chief, Assistant Division Chief/Senior Services and Regional Managers will review compiled data, and implement reporting generated on a quarterly basis (following the Department's seasonal quarters) from program participants and make program improvements for Spring FY25/Summer FY26, based on responses and cost recovery analysis.



Prince George's County Club 300 program

**Youth Services** - Maintain the 11,287 active Youth ID accounts at the start of FY25 and increase Youth ID Card sales by 10% by the end of FY25, and 5% in subsequent years FY26-FY27

**Action Plan:**

- During Fall/Winter FY25, Assistant Chief/Youth Services will survey current Youth ID holders, non-participating youth, and front-line staff as to benefits of the ID and barriers in obtaining one.
- By Fall FY26, Assistant Chief/Youth Services will work with PACE Division, and Youth Coordinators in NRLS and SRLS to develop a marketing plan to highlight the Youth ID Card and its benefits to the community. Feedback from the survey findings will be shared.
- Assistant Chief/Youth Services will work with PACE, NRLS and SRLS Teen Coordinators to plan and implement Kickoff events in Fall/Winter FY25.
- By Fall FY25, Assistant Chief/Youth Services will work with NRLS, SRLS, and other operating divisions serving youth to address challenges. The Assistant Chief will work with Parks Direct/Help Desk and PACE Division to provide staff training about the benefits of the Youth ID, how to process/establish accounts, and market the card to youth.
- Assistant Chief/Youth Services will work with PACE, NRLS, SRLS and other Divisions to develop a schedule of promotional events to highlight/market Youth ID Cards, during the 2024/2025 school year.
- By FY26, Assistant Chief/Youth Services will work with Park Police, Help Desk, Information Technology Services (ITS), SRLS, and NRLS to reinstitute Youth IDs with photos, as part of ongoing safety enhancements for center operations/youth programming.

## Youth and Countywide Sports Division (YCSD)

**Girls Initiatives** - By the end of FY25, girls' sports program offerings will increase to reach 1,000 participants.

**Action Plan:**

- By the end of FY25, Countywide Sports Coordinators/Specialists will debut a girl only National Football League (NFL) Flag Football or other girls' league.
- By the end of FY25, Countywide Sports Coordinators/Specialists will revitalize girls' Lacrosse, girls' Softball, and other girls' programs by offering at least 10 introductory developmental clinics/workshops per year.
- By the end of FY25, Assistant Division Chief will collaborate with internal divisions (i.e., NRLS, SRLS, PACE, etc.) to provide joint girls-only programs and increase digital and print marketing and promotions.

**Partnerships** - Increase our current partnerships with local colleges, professional and national sports groups, businesses, and other organizations to eight by the end of FY26. Currently the number stands at six.

**Action Plan:**

- By the close of FY26, Countywide Sports Coordinators/Specialists will offer at least five additional new programs collaborating with our partners to attract new users, increase the participation of current users, and re-engage previous users.
- By the close of FY26, Countywide Sports Coordinators/Specialists will offer a twice-yearly sports jamboree to promote our current partnerships and programs to the community. By the close of FY25, Division Chief and Assistant Division Chief will explore partnership opportunities with the University of Maryland Athletics Department to promote and educate our young participants in a variety of sports.

**Joint Use of Athletic Spaces** - Create a one-stop shop for the public to reserve indoor and outdoor field/gym spaces at schools, parks, and recreation facilities/fields.

**Action Plan:**

- By the close of FY25, Division Chief and Assistant Division Chief will have key YCSD and Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) staff meet regularly to strengthen relationships and explore policies, practices, and current separate systems and create best practices to streamline and combine services.
- By the close of FY25, Division Chief and Assistant Division Chief will resolve complex access, custodial, security, and storage issues to eliminate barriers to successful joint use.
- By the close of FY25, Division Chief and Assistant Division Chief will engage key community stakeholders through an open house or town hall engagement to educate the public on the new step-by-step process to reserve indoor and outdoor field/gym spaces at both agencies' facilities.

**Coaches** - Create a countywide coaches' registration portal to include YCSD, Prince George's County Boys' and Girls' Clubs (PGCBGC), and other Prince George's County providers by FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- The YCSD team will work internally and externally to create master lists of current coaches in Prince George's County.
- The YCSD team will work seasonally to recruit new coaches that will be registered in the coaches' portal.
- The YCSD team will develop and outreach seasonally to fields and gyms throughout the county to promote the countywide coach's registration portal process.

**Expanded Programming** - Increase YCSD offerings to include more year-round programming (i.e., spring flag football, summer basketball) and non-traditional sports (i.e., cricket, volleyball) by FY29.

**Action Plan:**

- Coordinators/Specialists will survey current patrons to determine the programming they want offered during each season, in addition to using RecTrac data (i.e., full programs, waitlists).
- Coordinators/Specialists will research and monitor the programs being offered by competitors to ensure that YCSD program offerings are competitive and responsive to the county's needs.
- Coordinators/Specialists will assess, and report expanded programming progress on a quarterly basis through existing annual reports. Based on the outcomes, necessary data driven adjustments will be made to achieve the goal.

**Sports Delivery Model** – The YCSD Team will shift/develop and implement future programming to decrease duplications in oversaturated areas and fill gaps in programming to increase services in underserved areas by FY30.

**Action Plan:**

- Coordinators/Specialists will survey all current programming to identify and appropriately classify program offerings as developmental, instructional, recreational, competitive, or elite/specialty by FY30.
- Coordinators/Specialists will research countywide programming to include PGCBGC to identify where there is duplication of programming, and conversely where there are gaps in service as well as where participants are traveling from to participate.
- Coordinators/Specialists will assess and report quarterly summaries in annual reports. Based on the outcomes, necessary data driven adjustments will be made to achieve the goal.

## V. Program Opportunities Matrices

- [Programming Matrix \(AAFD\).pdf](#)
- [Programming Matrix \(ACHD\).pdf](#)
- [Programming Matrix \(NHRD\).pdf](#)
- [Programming Matrix \(NRLS\).pdf](#)
- [Programming Matrix \(SPD\).pdf](#)
- [Programming Matrix \(SRLS\).pdf](#)
- [Programming Matrix \(YCSD\).pdf](#)

## VI. Community Inventory

- [Outside Orgs that Offer Programming in Prince George's County.pdf](#)


## VII. Education for Leisure, Health, and Wellness

The Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George’s County, has been successful in educating the community on the benefits, values, and impacts of leisure and recreation services utilizing diverse communication channels such as social media, news media engagement, marketing, and outreach to external organizations, among other methods.

The Department’s social media platforms, including Facebook, X, Instagram, and LinkedIn are used to regularly engage with County residents, promote Department programs, services, and events, and share educational content both in English and Spanish. Social networking platforms like “Nextdoor” are utilized to target specific neighborhoods in the County with information relevant to them. Combined, all the Department’s social media platforms have a reach of over 110,000 accounts.

Strategic marketing campaigns have been deployed to inform specific demographics and promote inclusivity. This includes visually appealing and culturally sensitive promotional materials that speak to the diverse population of Prince George’s County. The weekly “Live More, Play More” e-newsletter delivers information about recreational services and programs to over 34,000 subscriber’s email inboxes, both in English and Spanish. Advertisement purchases in radio, television, print media, social media, and movie theatres also allow the Department to target information to specific demographics, including Latinos, teens, young adults, and parents. In total, the Department invested over \$300,000 in paid advertising for FY23.

The Department actively engages with local community organizations, leaders, and schools to establish partnerships that enhance the outreach efforts. In FY23, the Department partnered with 350 organizations. In addition to partnerships, the Department’s Community Outreach and Engagement Team externally provides information about the Department’s core services, including



operations, programs, events, festivals, classes, and other activities. This involves participation in events that foster a sense of community and emphasize the value of recreational services. The Outreach Team attended 360 events and reached 200,000 people in FY23. The Department also uses an extensive database containing community leaders, groups, and organizations, including elected public officials, civic and homeowner associations, businesses, non-profits, and faith-based organizations. The database is used by the outreach team to assist the Department's team in promoting and disseminating relevant information.

Collaborating with news outlets, the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County has successfully secured coverage that highlights the positive impacts of the programs and services. For Hispanic Heritage Month 2023, Telemundo 44 out of Washington, D.C. went live from Watkins Regional Park to not only highlight the Hispanic Heritage Month programming, but to also showcase the programs and services provided year-round, including the teen program, "Mis Quince" and health and fitness opportunities at the community centers. For National Water Safety Month, Department aquatic experts communicated with print and broadcast news outlets about the importance of water safety, swim programs, and scholarship opportunities. In addition, press releases and media pitches are consistently disseminated to ensure accurate and positive coverage of upcoming events, programs, services, and success stories. The advertising value of the earned media in FY23 was \$102,000,000.

These multifaceted approaches have collectively contributed to fostering a better understanding of the positive impact that leisure and recreation services can have on individuals and communities in Prince George's County. By utilizing diverse communication channels and building strong community partnerships, the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County continues to enrich lives through accessible and meaningful recreation experiences.

Examples of messaging that promote the benefits of participation in specific programs include:

- Cycling Seniors Rackcard 2023 (2).pdf
- Fit & Strong Card 2023\_Final (3).pdf
- Flyer\_Sprout\_Film\_Festival2023\_Final (1).pdf
- Flyer\_Walktober2023\_Final.pdf
- MayIsFitness23\_Digital.pdf
- Mental Health Awareness Week\_2023\_FINAL.pdf
- New Year New You 24 Final.pdf



# VIII. Evaluation Methods for Recreation Programs and Facilities

Each year every division of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County publishes performance measures in the Proposed Annual Budget.

- <https://www.mncppc.org/departments/dhrm/>

**Planning** - Every 5 years the Department prepares and updates the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. This update includes a statistically valid survey and needs assessment. [https://www.pgparcs.com/wpcontent/uploads/2024/02/LPPRP\\_PG\\_2022\\_2-15-2023\\_sm.pdf](https://www.pgparcs.com/wpcontent/uploads/2024/02/LPPRP_PG_2022_2-15-2023_sm.pdf)

**Finance** - The Department of Finance regularly reports on revenues, expenses, and financial condition. <https://www.mncppc.org/344/Annual-Comprehensive-Financial-Report>

**Programming** - All programs and events have an evaluation component. An example is the Summer Programs survey.

**Training** - All training courses include a summative evaluation.

**Facilities** - Level of Service (LOS) Standards and Maintenance Standards are used to guide maintenance and development. The LOS standards are being used to plan for additional facilities to meet projected population growth as shown in the [Formula 2040 Functional Master Plan](#) and the [Formula 2040 Progress Report](#).

Some examples of evaluations from each division include:

## **Aquatics and Athletics Facilities Division (AAFD)**

- [AAFD Golf Evaluation Example.pdf](#)
- [AAFD Program Evaluation Example.pdf](#)

## **Arts Cultural and Heritage Division (ACHD)**

- [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Event Participant Survey.pdf](#)
- [Shakespeare In the Parks The Tempest SURVEY.pdf](#)

## **Natural and Historic Resources Division (NHRD)**

- [Nature Open Houses - Survey.pdf](#)
- [Parent-Teacher Evaluation.pdf](#)

## **Special Programs Division (SPD)**

- [Glow Walk Run 2022 Survey Results.pdf](#)

## **Recreation and Leisure Services Divisions (NRLS and SRLS)**

- [Child Care Survey - \(M-NCPPC\)\(1-65\).xlsx](#)
- [Kids'Care Parent Survey.pptx](#)



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## IX. Appendices

- I. Divisional Organization Charts
- II. Individual (Commemorative and Philanthropic) Naming Rights Policy: # PG-24-01
- III. Policy on Naming Rights, Advertising Rights, and Sponsorship Benefits: # PG-24-02
- IV. Periodic Review of CRPP Action Plans



# Montgomery County Department of Parks

## Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP)

### FY25 - FY30

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# I. Introduction

The Montgomery County Department of Parks (Montgomery Parks), part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), provides the best park experience possible to our more than one million residents. We recognize the importance of providing residents with safe and accessible places to gather, enjoy the outdoors, and participate in healthy, recreational activities.

Our park system includes (Updated August 2024):

- 419 parks across 37,768 acres
- 287 outdoor tennis courts
- 272 athletic fields
- 270.6 miles of paved and natural surface trails
- 273 playgrounds
- 226 basketball courts
- 136 picnic areas
- 114 historic structures
- 102 campsites
- 90+ pickleball courts
- 29 park activity buildings
- 10 Futsal/soccer courts
- 4 lakes
- 3 bike parks
- 3 skate parks

Other facilities include nature centers, museums, miniature trains and carousels, indoor tennis facilities, boat rental facilities, ice rinks, event spaces, public gardens, and more.

## Vision

To provide an enjoyable, accessible, safe, and green park system that promotes community through shared spaces and treasured experiences.

## Mission

To protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer various enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places.

## Purpose

The key purposes of parks are to encourage physical activity, facilitate social interaction, and protect the environment. Parks and recreation facilities should provide irresistible opportunities for healthy physical activities for people of all interests and physical abilities. Parks and public spaces are platforms for social interaction, community-building events, and the development and celebration of distinctive community identity.

## Values

- **Stewardship:** Manage the county park system to meet the needs of current and future generations.
- **Recreation:** Offer leisure activities that strengthen the body, sharpen the mind, and renew the spirit.
- **Excellence:** Deliver high quality products, services, and experiences.
- **Integrity:** Operate with an honest and balanced perspective.
- **Service:** Be courteous, helpful, and accessible internally and externally.
- **Education:** Promote learning opportunities.
- **Collaboration:** Work with residents, communities, public and private organizations, and policymakers.
- **Diversity:** Support and embrace cultural differences and offer suitable programs, activities, and services.
- **Dedication:** Commit to getting the job done the right way, no matter what it takes.

## One Commission, One Philosophy: Thriving in a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- M-NCPPC, a leader in land use planning, parks, and recreation, celebrates the diversity of our workforce and the communities we serve. Diversity combined with a commitment to equity and inclusion communicates our organizational values, enriches the lives of our employees, and bolsters innovative thinking essential to success.
- M-NCPPC recognizes diversity as a dynamic mix of personal and cultural characteristics, perspectives, and relationships as a vital organizational resource. In the workplace, diversity includes all the differences that define each of us as unique individuals. These differences include culture, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity, nationality, age, religion, abilities, sexual orientation, experiences, opinions and beliefs, and any protected groups.
- M-NCPPC believes equity is an active commitment to unbiased treatment while providing access and opportunity for people of all backgrounds to participate and thrive in the workplace.
- M-NCPPC strives to enhance inclusion with a true sense of belonging that encourages the participation of all individuals by removing barriers, building a culture of connectedness, and recognizing that every voice adds value to our organization.

## Montgomery County, Maryland

With more than 1 million residents and just over 500 square miles of land, Montgomery County is a large and complex jurisdiction that includes rural, suburban, and urban areas. Our community is aging and increasingly diverse in every sense, with no one racial or ethnic group forming a majority of the population and almost half of residents speaking a language other than English at home. The county's gross economic output exceeds \$81 billion a year - more than 13 states - and it is one of the most affluent jurisdictions in the United States, with a median household income of \$111,812, yet 21 percent of households have incomes below \$50,000 and 39.8 percent of students qualify for free or reduced meals in our public schools.

Montgomery County's parks and recreational amenities - from its urban parks, athletic facilities, ice rinks, and trails to its museums, historic buildings, and conservation area parks - contribute significantly to the county's quality of life and economic competitiveness. In a 2021 survey of residents, 93 percent of respondents said that parks, trails, and recreation are an important part of what makes Montgomery County a great place to live and work.

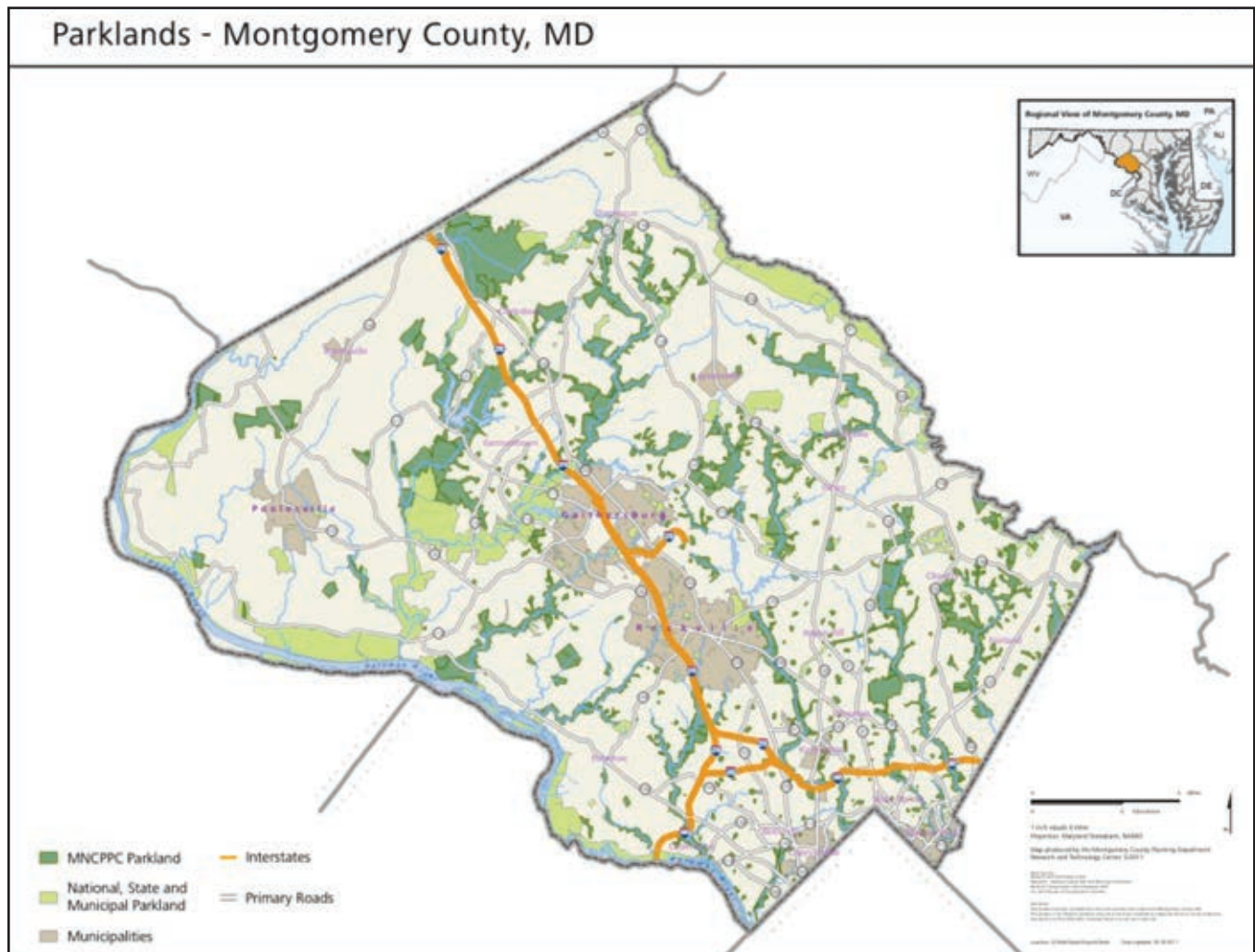


Figure 1. M-NCPPC Parkland in Montgomery County

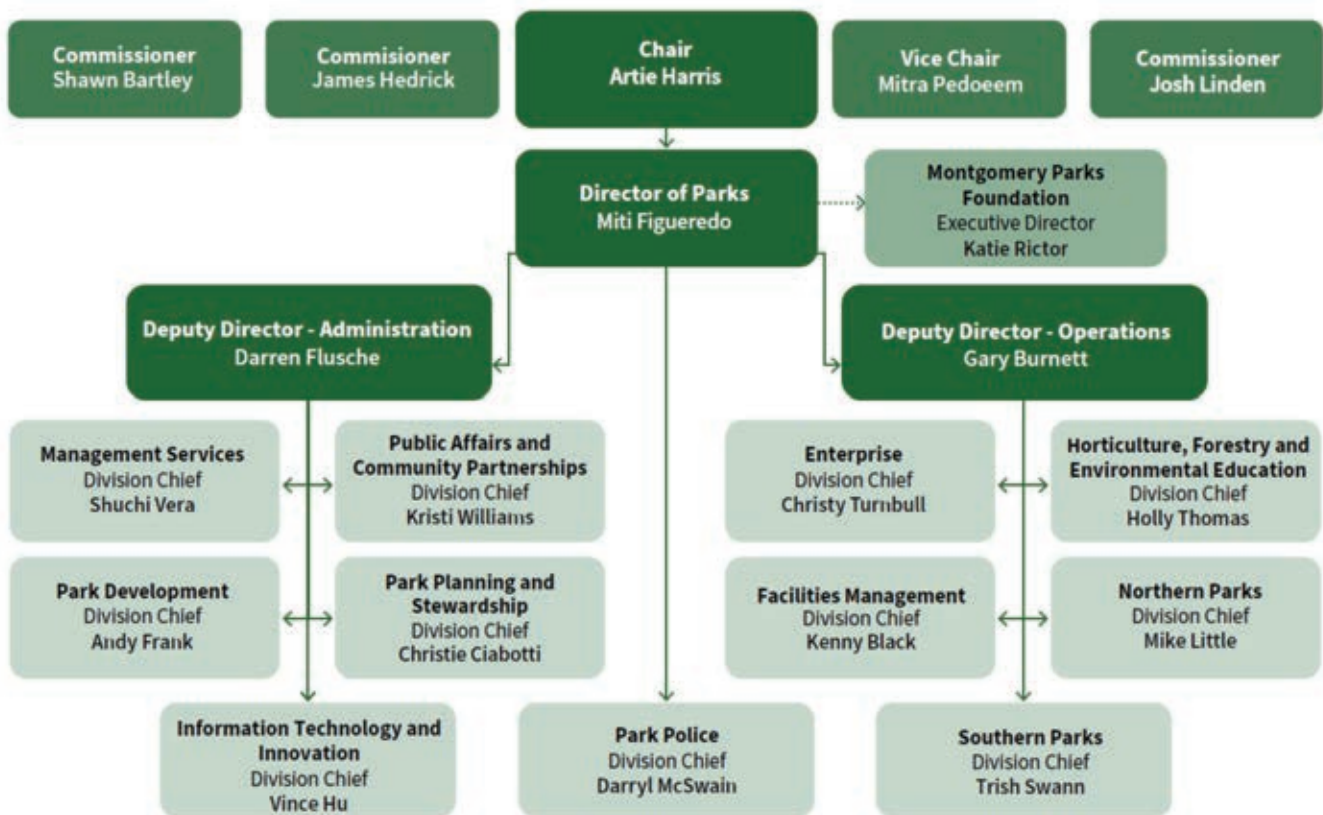
Montgomery Parks continually strives to ensure residents receive the best park experience possible, whether it's a picnic at Black Hill Regional Park, an ice-skating lesson at one of our two rinks, a nature program at one of our nature centers, a visit to our Garden of Lights show at Brookside Gardens, or a volunteer outing building and/or maintaining natural surface trails. We recognize the importance of providing residents with safe and accessible places to gather, enjoy the outdoors, learn about nature or cultural history, and participate in healthy recreational activities. In 2022, the Montgomery County Planning Board approved Montgomery Parks' PROS (Parks, Recreation and Open Space) Plan which focuses on providing equitably activated, central community spaces that meet recreational needs and protecting and managing natural and cultural resources for future generations.

- [About Montgomery Parks](#)


The parks and recreation programs and services offered in Montgomery County are vast and varied. The main providers of these services are Montgomery Parks and the Montgomery County Department of Recreation (which is not part of M-NCPPC), and a multitude of other municipal and quasi-public providers contribute to the combination of recreational and leisure services as well.

- [Guide to Classes and Camps](#)

### Organizational & Leadership Structure Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission – Montgomery Parks



Revised: Oct -07-2024



Five divisions of Montgomery Parks offer free or fee-based recreational programming, operate and manage facilities that host programs, publicize the programs, and track participation data. They are the Enterprise Division, Horticulture Forestry and Environmental Education Division, Management Services Division, Park Planning and Stewardship Division and Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division. This Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP) contains goals, objectives, and action plans for each of the five divisions represented. The Action Plans for each division will be reviewed and updated every two years during the span of this plan; Fiscal Year 26, FY28, and FY30. The Programs offered by each division are outlined below:

### **Enterprise Division**

- Indoor Ice
- Indoor Tennis
- Archery & Golf
- Community Events

### **Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education (HFEE)**

- Brookside Gardens
- Nature Centers
- Parks Activation

### **Management Services**

- Program Access

### **Park Planning & Stewardship**

- Archeology
- Trails

### **Public Affairs and Community Partnerships (PACP)**

- Public Outreach
- Volunteer Services
- Marketing
- Permits



## II. Goals and Objectives

### Enterprise Division

**Indoor Ice Programs:** Increase retention of skaters beyond the beginner classes.

**Indoor Ice Programs:** Grow the Aspire Skating Program by 10% each year in FY 2025-2030. Aspire is our bridge program from the basic skills classes to the figure skating program. It introduces skaters to different avenues of figure skating, educates parents on the sport, and creates a social connectivity between skaters.

**Indoor Ice Programs:** Develop an ice-skating scholarship to assist skaters with financial need with equipment and/or programs.

**Indoor Tennis:** Increase the total number of group lesson participants by 20% over baseline data from FY24 by 2026 at both facilities.

**Archery and Golf:** Increase the total number of classes and group lesson participants by 10% over baseline data from FY24 by 2026

**Community Events:** Develop signature events throughout the year to gain exposure and increase participation during underutilized times at facilities

### Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education Division (HFEE)

**Brookside Gardens - Children:** Identify a new community partner each year that aligns with Brookside Gardens' mission and incorporate their participation in free, special events.

**Brookside Gardens - Children:** Increase opportunities for youth involved in service-learning as part of their field trip programming.

**Brookside Gardens - Children:** Increase opportunities for youth to explore and prepare for careers in disciplines aligned with Brookside Gardens' mission.

**Brookside Gardens - Wellness:** Provide a meaningful and effective tool for community members to improve their mental health outcomes.

**Brookside Gardens - Wellness:** Increase the accessibility of Health & Wellness programming for adult audiences.

**Brookside Gardens - Adult Education:** Expand programming at Brookside Gardens that fosters social interaction among Montgomery County's diverse communities.

**Brookside Gardens - Adult Education:** Engage residents in their role in protecting the environment.

**Nature Centers:** Demonstrate PROS plan alignment of programs by FY27.

**Nature Centers:** Increase engagement of teens through programs and internships by 50% over baseline data from FY24 by FY30.

**Nature Centers:** Increase engagement of 55+ community through programs and volunteerism by 50% over baseline data from FY24 by FY28.

**Nature Centers:** Increase outreach by 15% by FY2027 over baseline data from FY24 by supporting Departmental and Division events and programs.

**Park Activation:** Develop a signature special event and street festival that highlights Montgomery Parks trails system and open parkways.

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**Park Activation:** Increase attendance at park activation produced local, regional and signature special events by 100% percent over baseline data from FY24 by the end of FY25.

## Management Services Division

**Program Access:** Develop one new Therapeutic Recreation or Adaptive Sports program per year. Community Therapeutic Recreation and Adaptive Sports Programs will enhance overall well-being and social functioning by integrating individuals into their community in a more flexible and inclusive manner.

**Program Access:** Increase participation in the 55+ programs coordinated through Program Access (socials, classes, volunteer opportunities dedicated to seniors) by 20% over baseline data from FY24 by the end of FY30. Enhancing programs for 55+ is aligned with the department's PROS Plan.

**Program Access:** Increase public awareness about our inclusive services and adaptive programs.

## Park Planning and Stewardship Division (PPSD)

**Archeology:** In FY25, assess and address transportation accessibility barriers to Archaeology Programs held at Needwood Mansion.

**Archeology:** Develop a pilot program in FY26 that will reach a wider, diverse audience.

**Trails:** Increase annual participation in Roots to Rocks Rides by 50% over baseline data from FY24 to 250 participants per year. The Roots to Rocks program aims to increase access to mountain biking through safe and fun mountain biking opportunities.

**Trails:** Continue running the Youth Trail Ambassador Program and offer multiple two-week sessions each year.

**Trails:** Increase Trail Volunteer work to over 3,500 volunteer hours annually.

## Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division (PACP)

**Public Outreach:** Develop department-wide standard operating procedures for community engagement to ensure a consistent approach for parks' projects and initiatives by June 2023.

**Volunteer Services:** Develop department-wide standard operating procedures for the management of volunteers by June 2025.

**Marketing:** Increase attendance at park programs and events.

**Permits:** Enable customers to make online reservations independently, eliminating the need to contact our office, while still providing excellent customer service.

# III. Fees and Cost Recovery

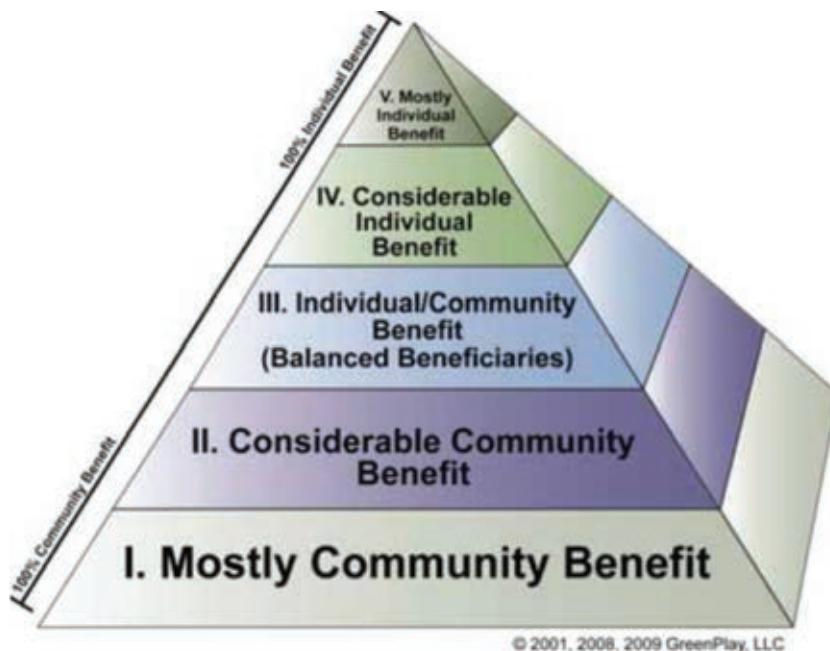
Montgomery Parks created cost recovery pyramids that were vetted through a public process. The target cost recovery percentages were established based on current cost recovery when all direct (and indirect costs for Enterprise programs) were allocated, and with the goal of increasing cost recovery for the Department.

**Direct Costs** include all the specific, identifiable expenses (fixed and variable) associated with providing a service, or operating and maintaining a facility, space, or program. These expenses would not exist without the program or service.

**Departmental Administration or Indirect Costs** encompass the remaining overhead (fixed and variable) not identified as Direct Costs. These Indirect Costs would exist without any one specific service. Indirect costs are intended to be managed and covered by taxpayer investment.

**The Minimum Cost Recovery Percentages** were established by analyzing to which category or categories of service most resources were allocated by each tier or level, coupled with typically current cost recovery based on the definitions of direct and indirect costs. The Minimum Cost Recovery Percentages are only attempting to recover Direct Cost of service provision, not all costs, or fully loaded (direct and indirect) cost.

The pyramid is divided into five levels. Conceptually, the base level is the foundation of the pyramid and represents the core mission of the park system. Montgomery Parks’ work program is built with a broad supporting base of core services, enhanced with more specialized services as resources allow. The five levels are outlined below.



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### **Level 1 - Mostly Community Benefit**

The foundational level is the largest and includes those services, programs, and facilities which mostly benefit the community as a whole. These services may increase property values, provide safety, address social needs, and enhance the quality of life for residents. The community generally pays for these basic services via tax support. These services are generally offered to residents at a minimal charge or with no fee.

### **Level 2 – Considerable Community Benefit**

The second and smaller level of the pyramid represents services which promote individual physical and mental well-being and may begin to provide skill development. They are generally traditionally expected services and/or beginner instructional levels. These costs are primarily covered by tax support to account for the considerable community benefit with a portion of the costs covered by participant fees to account for the individual benefit received by the service.

### **Level 3 – Balanced Individual/Community Benefit**

The middle level of the pyramid represents services that promote individual physical and mental well-being and provide an intermediate level of skill development. This level provides balanced benefits, and the participant fees should recover a higher percentage of the costs than those services that fall into lower pyramid levels.

### **Level 4 – Considerable Individual Benefit**


This level of the pyramid represents specialized services for specific groups and those that may have a competitive focus. Services in this level may be priced to recover full costs.

### **Level 5 – Mostly Individual Benefit**

At the top of the pyramid, this smallest level represents services which have a profit center potential, may be in the same market space as the private sector, or may fall outside the core mission of the agency. In this level, services should be priced to recover full cost in addition to a designated profit percentage.

## **Montgomery Parks Fee Schedule**

The Department's [Policy on User Fees](#) covers programs in both the Enterprise Division and the Horticulture, Forestry, and Environmental Education (HFEE) Division. The Enterprise Division provides a positive park experience, achieves an appropriate balance among fees and public service, develops new programs, expands existing programs, maintains, repurposes and/or enhances current facilities, and continues to operate Enterprise facilities in a fiscally responsible way. The Enterprise Division's facilities include the indoor ice rinks, indoor tennis centers, miniature trains and boating centers. These facilities are mandated by the County Council to be completely self-supporting, including facility operating costs, capital improvements and debt service for new facilities. The Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education Division preserves and maintains the natural and cultural resources of parklands and facilities; ensures a safe environment for park patrons; encourages the use of parks; and enhances the natural beauty of parks. Through programming, events, interpretation, training, and consultation, the Division provides opportunities for residents to engage in lifelong learning, inspires their understanding and appreciation of the natural world, encourages healthy habits to increase mental and physical well-being, and fosters meaningful community connections. The Enterprise Division's facilities include the ice rinks, tennis centers,



miniature trains and boating centers. These facilities are mandated by the County Council to be completely self-supporting, including facility operating costs, capital improvements and debt service for new facilities. The Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education Division preserves and maintains the natural and cultural resources of parklands and facilities; ensures a safe environment for park patrons; encourages the use of parks; and enhances the natural beauty of parks. Through programming, events, interpretation, training, and consultation, the Division provides opportunities for residents to engage in lifelong learning, inspires their understanding and appreciation of the natural world, encourages healthy habits to increase mental and physical well-being, and fosters meaningful community connections.

Prior to developing the proposed user fee schedules for facilities or programs, staff conduct surveys of other local districts' user fees for similar facilities. This information, together with input from department staff, attendance information and use patterns for each facility is used to draft the recommended schedule of fees.

Regular and timely fee adjustments are necessary to keep our fees competitive with comparable public and private self-supporting facilities or programs and/or to respond to market influences that affect pricing, user demand, etc.

The Parks Department's mission is to provide affordable and safe recreational programs and amenities for all. While our proposed fees reflect that mission, the County Council mandate has a significant impact on our ability to keep our fees affordable for all county residents. The Enterprise Division provides a 50% fee reduction for general admission fees, group lessons and programs for low-income residents. In addition, the Division uses advertised "Specials" or discounts to increase participation, thus increasing revenues. Staff continually monitors and assesses facility usage to increase participation.

Consistent with the Department's user fee policy, user fees for self-supporting Enterprise facilities, services, and programs are established at a level which (1) is competitive with comparable public and private facilities and services in the area; (2) can reasonably be expected to generate sufficient revenue to sustain administrative, operating and maintenance costs; (3) may generate surplus operating income to fund capital improvements at existing and developing facilities; and (4) reflects user demand and patterns of use.

## **Fee Reduction Program**

M-NCPPC recognizes that many residents are financially unable to participate in the activities and programs offered at our fee-based facilities. The Fee Reduction Program is open to Montgomery County residents only and proof of residency is required. Montgomery Parks Fee Reduction Program more information:

Montgomery Parks is committed to serving the needs of all residents of Montgomery County and recognizes that many residents are financially unable to participate in the activities and programs offered at our fee-based facilities. Therefore, we have established a Fee Reduction Program, so these programs are available to as many county residents as possible. The Fee Reduction Program offers two ways to save.

- Part 1 – Half-off a class, camp, lesson, or program
- Part 2 – Half-off admission coupons to some of our facilities

The fee reduction is awarded based on a family receiving eligible outside public assistance. Applications are approved seasonally for certain classes, camps, lessons, or programs. As a general guideline, only one application will be approved per family, per season. Programs and class offerings are on a “first-come, first-served” basis, and are subject to space availability. There are many programs, activities, and events throughout the year offered in our parks, nature centers, and facilities that are free. Go to the Montgomery Parks website and view all the activities and upcoming events offered in “The Guide” each season.

- [Current Parks Program Guides](#)

Of course, enjoying our outdoor spaces, playgrounds, and the beauty of our parks is always free!

The Marye Wells-Harley Dream Camp Scholarship Fund ensures that all children have access to an exciting Summer Camp experience! Scholarships are available for Montgomery County residents aged 6–14. Montgomery Parks Summer Camps are certified by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). When you choose a [MDH certified youth camp program](#), you are selecting a program that is inspected to meet state health and safety requirements.



Dancing at Brookside Gardens during Summer Twilight Concert Series

# IV. Division Action Plans

## Enterprise Division

### Indoor Ice Programs

**Goal 1:** Increase retention of skaters beyond the beginner classes.

**Action Plan:**

- Survey current patrons to see what class times they prefer and what other class offerings they would like to see.
- Work with instructors to update the curriculum and pipeline of class structure. Add appropriate classes to curriculum.
- Increase promotion of skating and hockey class pipeline to current class skaters and to the public.
- Hold clinics in between class series to for more specialized skating like hockey and beginning figure skating (youth and adult) to encourage new participation.
- Direct email communications to figure skaters to communicate the schedules and encourage advance sign up.

**Goal 2:** Grow the Aspire Skating Program by 10% each year in FY 2025-2030. Aspire is our bridge program from the basic skills classes to the figure skating program. It introduces skaters to different avenues of figure skating, educates parents on the sport, and creates a social connectivity between skaters.

**Action Plan:**

- The programming team will work with the facility manager to schedule more ice time that figure skaters can utilize during the school year and summer.
- The programming team will work to educate the skaters being promoted from the basic skill levels about practicing on freestyle sessions to advance their skills.
- The programming team will work with the user groups of Wheaton Figure Skating club, Montgomery County High School Skating Team, and the Howard University Skating team to schedule ice when these members can also skate.
- Add regular off-ice classes multiple days each week for Aspire skaters.
- Create social events for the Aspire skaters and families.
- Create additional Aspire programs including a learn to compete class, an ice show class, and other special clinics.
- Survey skaters and parents to see how they would like the program to grow.

**Goal 3:** Develop an ice-skating scholarship to assist skaters with a financial need with equipment and/or programs.

**Action Plan:**

- Determine scholarship parameters and audience.
- Work with Parks Foundation on fundraising avenues to endow a scholarship program.
- Develop a marketing strategy.
- Identify Selection process.

## Indoor Tennis Programs

**Goal:** Increase the total number of group lesson participants by 20% over 2024 baseline numbers by 2026 at both facilities.

**Action Plan:**

- Recruit, hire and train additional tennis instructors by working with the Class and Compensation Team to update classification charts to reflect the current USPTA and PTR Certifications.
- Focus on adult and senior programs on weekday mornings in the Fall, Winter, and Spring Series (Courts are occupied by summer camps June through August).
- Offer 10am and 11am classes at Wheaton Tennis Monday through Friday, more than doubling our weekday morning offerings.
- Reserve one additional court for programs at Pauline Betz Addie (PBA) Tennis Center Monday through Friday 10am to 1pm, doubling our weekday morning offerings.



Youth tennis program at Wheaton Indoor Tennis



## Archery & Golf Programs

**Goal:** Increase the total number of classes and group lesson participants by 10% by 2026

**Action Plan:**

- Identify current class offerings as well as underutilized class times
- Survey participants to understand interest in additional class offerings
- Work with instructors to create additional curriculum, add classes and clinics to current schedule
- Offer demo days or workshops for the community to be introduced to the activity and try out equipment
- Identify audience for targeted outreach

## Community Events

**Goal:** Develop signature events throughout the year to gain exposure and increase participation during underutilized times at facilities

**Action Plan:**

- Identify current events offered throughout the division.
- Identify underutilized times and facilities.
- Incorporate multiple aspects of facility offerings to appeal to diverse communities.
- Develop event logistics
- Work with marketing department for improved strategies to connect with new customers.
- Grow partnerships with local schools to increase participation and volunteer opportunities.

# Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education Division

## Brookside Gardens

### Children's Programs

**Goal #1:** To identify a new community partner each year that aligns with Brookside Gardens' mission and incorporate their participation in free, special events.

**Action Plan:**

- Identify priority groups for targeted outreach using current PROS and Thrive Montgomery 2050 plans.
- Create a knowledge base of local and regional organizations that would serve as potential partners.
- Identify funding sources to compensate partner organizations appropriately for their work.
- Children's education will utilize program surveys, in person feedback, and related evaluation tools to identify effectiveness of the outreach.
- Develop a marketing plan for special events that highlights the partner organization's involvement and leverages their community presence to drive participation.
- Develop SOPs for special event programs that will serve as a template for overall program development and implementation.

**Goal #2:** To increase opportunities for youth involved in service-learning as part of their field trip programming.

**Action Plan:**

- Identify priority groups for targeted outreach using current PROS and Thrive Montgomery 2050 plans.
- Identify at least one middle school or one high school in the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) system that hasn't visited Brookside Gardens on a field trip during the previous school year for a service-learning program
- Collaborate externally with administration, faculty, and staff at the identified school and other local schools to plan and deliver service-learning programming relevant to their curriculum and student population.
- Collaborate internally with volunteer coordinator, horticulture and visitor center staff as needed to provide an authentic service component for youth while ensuring safety and best practices in the garden spaces.
- Continue developing and implementing SOPs for service-learning programs that will serve as a template for overall program development and implementation.
- Develop evaluation tools for teachers, students, and community members engaged in these service-learning field trips.

**Goal #3:** To increase opportunities for youth to explore and prepare for careers in disciplines aligned with Brookside Gardens' mission.

**Action Plan:**

- To annually provide at least one free program to youth in the community with career-based programming and STEM workforce exposure.
- Collaborate externally with MCPS and area schools engaged in leadership and career-readiness programming to align goals and support existing community efforts.
- Facilitate panel discussions and guest speaker experiences for current staff to present to students in either middle school or high school as part of their programmed visit to Brookside Gardens. Collaborate internally with volunteer coordinator, horticulture staff and visitor center staff.
- Continue developing and implementing SOPs for career-focused programming that will serve as a template for overall program development and implementation.
- Develop evaluation tools for teachers, students, and community members engaged in these career-based workshops.

## Wellness Programs

**Goal #1:** To provide a meaningful and effective tool for community members to improve their mental health outcomes.

**Action Plan:**

- Work with licensed social workers to facilitate discussions surrounding participation in the Strolls for Well-Being program.
- Measure Strolls for Well-Being program's effect on participants' outlook on life using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), adjusting the program following analysis of results.
- Measure Strolls for Well-Being program's effect on participants' personal growth, using the Personal Growth Scale, adjusting the program following analysis of results.
- Coordinate with licensed social workers to obtain referrals allowing their clients to participate in the Strolls for Well-Being program free of charge.
- Identify and address barriers to participation in the Strolls for Well-Being program.

**Goal #2:** To increase the accessibility of Health & Wellness programming for adult audiences.

**Action Plan:**

- Survey existing customers to determine the types of additional programming they would be interested in taking.
- Develop and offer events that appeal to young adults.
- Offer wellness retreats at Brookside Gardens that leverage the grounds and facilities to promote physical, emotional, and mental health.
- Develop health and wellness programs, like Gentle Yoga, that are tailored to seniors and customers with disabilities.

## Adult Education Programs

**Goal #1:** To expand programming at Brookside Gardens that fosters social interaction among Montgomery County's diverse communities.

**Action Plan:**

- Use the Community Equity Index and Equity Focus Area tools to identify communities who may be underserved by our program offerings.
- Conduct online and in person visitor surveys to understand key programming interests among priority groups.
- Offer 2-3 additional free performing arts events that appeal to a wide variety of audiences.
- Offer one food-related event featuring the cuisines and cultures of the county's diverse local communities.
- Partner with Montgomery Parks Activation Team to offer free public programming at Brookside Gardens.
- Identify priority groups for targeted outreach using the PROS and Thrive Montgomery 2050 plans.

**Goal #2:** To engage residents in their role in protecting the environment.

**Action Plan:**

- Expand program offerings that leverage tours of home gardens as real-world case studies of sustainable landscape projects.
- Engage national leaders to give lectures on topics of sustainable landscape design and ecological maintenance practices to the public.
- Expand the national reach of the annual GreenScapes Symposium from participants in 25 states to 30 states and increase registration by 5%.
- Collaborate externally with local arts organizations to increase program offerings that advance the understanding and stewardship of the environment.
- Increase the number of programs to local parks that feature habitat restoration projects and the expertise of Montgomery Parks' staff.



**Tai Chi Program at Brookside Gardens**

## Nature Centers

**Goal #1:** Nature Centers will demonstrate PROS plan alignment of programs by FY27.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility Managers will establish baseline of PROS plan program alignment for FY25.
- Facility Managers will track program alignments with the PROS plan objectives each year going forward.

**Goal #2:** Nature Centers will increase engagement of teens through programs and internships by 50% by FY30.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility Managers will establish baseline number of teen engagement for FY25.
- Facility Managers will track teen engagement through programs and internships to grow total toward FY30.

**Goal #3:** Nature Centers will increase engagement of 55+ community through programs and volunteerism by 50% by FY28.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility Managers will establish baseline number of 55+ community engagement for FY25.
- Facility Managers will track 55+ community engagement through programs and volunteerism to grow total toward FY28.

**Goal #4:** By supporting Departmental and Division events and programs, Nature Centers will increase outreach by 15% by FY27 according to baseline data from FY24.

**Action Plan:**

- Facility Managers will establish baseline number of programs and events designated as outreach for FY25.
- Facility Managers will target partnerships for outreach programs to increase outreach contacts each year to grow total toward FY27.

## Parks Activation

**Goal #1:** To develop a signature special event and street festival that highlights Montgomery Parks' trails system and open parkways.

**Action Plan**

- Identify and highlight trails that connect to Sligo Creek Parkway.
- Incorporate multiple programming elements that appeal to a diverse community including children, youth, and adults.
- Develop an event layout that provides accessibility to the event and event features.
- Engage with other departments on event programming opportunities within the organization and community that highlight Montgomery Parks' commitment to creating social connections and environmental stewardship.
- Develop a marketing and outreach strategy to promote the event and highlight programs and opportunities supported by Montgomery Parks.

**Goal #2:** Starting in FY24, increase attendance at park activation-produced local, regional and signature special events by 100% percent by the end of FY25.

**Action Plan**

- Assess current schedule of special events and determine potential growth opportunities.
- Develop and implement a county-wide signature special event that highlights Montgomery Parks system of trails and open parkways.
- Identify locations of currently under programmed areas within Montgomery County and equity-focus areas.
- Assess program content to ensure events and programming are reflective of the diverse needs of Montgomery County.
- Establish partnerships with community organizations, non-profits, outside groups and agencies that support events and programming opportunities.
- Implement a fitness and wellness class program conducted in parks and park activity buildings.



Acoustic Ales and Tales at Elm Street Urban Park



Community clean-up at Breewood Neighborhood Park

# Management Services Division

## Program Access

**Goal #1:** To develop one new Therapeutic Recreation or Adaptive Sports program per year. Community Therapeutic Recreation and Adaptive Sports Programs will enhance overall well-being and social functioning by integrating individuals into their community in a more flexible and inclusive manner.

### Action Plan:

- Evaluate target populations including age groups, disabilities, and other relevant factors to determine need in the community and current gaps in service
- Continue to collaborate with local community organizations, healthcare providers, schools, and other stakeholders to gain insights and support for proposed programs and establish partnerships to share resources and expertise.
- Invest in universal adaptive sports equipment to build a repository of items for public use.
- Continue to invest in continued learning opportunities through professional certification courses, adaptive sports programming, and inclusive program design.
- Develop a marketing strategy to promote new programs within the community and implement unique strategies to recruit new participants.
- Continue to evaluate program offerings through online evaluations, in person interviews and other program feedback to determine effectiveness and engagement.
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures for new programs

**Goal #2:** To increase participation in the 55+ programs coordinated through Program Access (socials, classes, volunteer opportunities dedicated to seniors) by 20% over FY24 participation by the end of FY30. Enhancing programs for 55+ is aligned with the department's PROS Plan.

### Action Plan:

- Assess activities and services in the community to determine needs and current gaps in service.
- Continue to offer diverse program options for seniors in Montgomery County.
- Continue to evaluate program offerings through online evaluations, in person interviews and other program feedback to determine effectiveness and engagement.
- Establish partnerships with local senior organizations to leverage their networks for outreach and promotion.
- Ensure that information about 55+ programs is easily accessible to seniors, considering different communication preferences (e.g., printed materials, online platforms, community bulletin boards).

**Goal #3:** To increase public awareness about our inclusive services and adaptive programs.

**Action Plan**

- Plan and implement one new inclusive special event to showcase our inclusive services and adaptive programs.
- Highlight success stories, testimonials, and the overall positive impact of programs through social media, newsletters, and other forums.
- Continue promoting the use of communication tools in parks including Communication Boards at select park playgrounds and social stories for large special events.
- Develop a promotional video that explains our operations and services.
- Develop marketing materials in languages other than English.
- Highlight accessible special event features in event marketing materials including ramps, sign language interpreters, sensory retreat tent and accessible shuttle cart.



Program Access' Shine Brighter/Autism Acceptance event at Wheaton Regional Park



# Park Planning and Stewardship Division

## Archaeology Programs

**Goal #1:** In FY25, assess and address transportation accessibility barriers to Archaeology Programs held at Needwood Mansion.

**Action Plan:**

- The Archaeology team will develop a plan to increase access to the annual Family Archaeology Day Event.
- Address transportation barrier by piloting a program that offers a free shuttle to the event.
- Identify a shuttle pick-up location that targets diverse and/or underserved populations.
- Staff will survey participants using a survey that includes a question measuring a participant's satisfaction with the program/event's accessibility.

**Goal #2:** Develop an Archeology pilot program in FY26 that will reach a wider, diverse audience.

**Action Plan:**

- Use the Community Equity Index and Equity Focus Area tools to locate a nearby community identified as having potential racial and social inequities.
- Coordinate with the Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division to create an appropriate marketing approach to target the identified community.
- Staff will survey participants using a survey that gives an option for participants to identify their inclusion within a historically marginalized group, including Black, Hispanic, Native American and LGBTQ communities.

## Trails Programs

**Goal #1:** Increase annual participation in Roots to Rocks Rides by 10% from 2024 levels (250 participants).

**Action Plan:**

- Hire additional Roots to Rocks seasonal staff. With additional staff we can increase the number of rides and events offered a month from a goal of 8 rides a month to at least 12. Additional staff will also allow us to increase group size by maintaining a low participant to staff ratio.
- Increase presence at community events and strengthen partnerships with other agencies looking to invest in youth mountain biking programs.
- Maintain events at our most well attended locations but also increase the focus on providing geographic parity.

**Goal #2:** Continue the Youth Trail Ambassador Program and offer multiple two-week sessions each year.

**Action Plan:**

- Increase promotion of the Roots to Rocks program through social media, web content, and community presence.
- As most prospective trail ambassadors have many scheduling conflicts that prevent them from joining the two-week sessions in summer, commit to adjusting our program dates to accommodate the highest number of prospective participants.

**Goal #3:** Increase Trail Volunteer work to over 3,500 hours annually beginning in 2025.

**Action Plan**

- Hire full-time dedicated staff person to coordinate trail volunteer workdays and track condition reports produced by volunteers.
- Increase the number of trail volunteer and trail volunteer leader trainings to grow work program.
- Improve usability and digitize trail condition reporting to better track trail volunteer work and improve efficiencies.
- Increase promotion of trail volunteer opportunities through social media, web content, and community presence.
- Increase direct engagement with potential volunteer groups to organize.
- Coordinate with trails staff to identify priority volunteer projects.



**Volunteer trail construction at Fairland Recreational Park**

# Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division

## Public Outreach

**Goal:** Develop department-wide standard operating procedures for community engagement to ensure a consistent approach for parks' projects and initiatives by June 2023.

**Action Steps:**

- Conduct research on best practices and emerging trends related to public outreach, including racial equity and social justice practices.
- Develop framework for public outreach standards, including various templates to be used for public outreach projects.
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation and public outreach standards manual.
- Present public outreach standards to leadership and parks staff, and follow-up with links to public outreach materials and templates.

## Volunteer Services

**Goal:** Develop department wide standard operating procedures for the management of volunteers by June 2025.

**Action Plan:**

- Develop and implement a volunteer general orientation for all volunteers placed in multiday volunteer positions.
- Develop and implement a volunteer evaluation process for volunteer program managers.
- Streamline the VSO onboarding process during our database system upgrade that includes integration of criminal history checks and the volunteer online trainings.
- Utilize grant funding to increase staff capacity to address community needs for more Volunteer Park Clean Ups.
- Provide technical support for department staff to engage volunteers in work programs.
- Implement the newly revised Job Coach and Companion Form as a tool for more inclusive volunteer opportunities.
- Develop and maintain relationships with organizations and programs who share our mission and values.

## Marketing

**Goal:** Increase attendance at park programs and events

**Action Plan:**

- Utilize digital marketing efforts to increase awareness of park events, programs, and festivals
- Implement new social media strategies to improve public engagement with Montgomery Parks content
- Develop better Google Ads and Meta Ads strategies to increase online presence and search engine optimization
- Develop and maintain digital accessibility at WCAG 2.1 AA standards to increase public access to all digital content for all park users regardless of abilities

## Permits

**Goal:** Enable customers to make online reservations independently, eliminating the need to contact our office, while still providing excellent customer service.

**Action Plan:**

- Develop a standard operating manual for employees that educates customers, empowering them to utilize self-service options.
- Generate How-To videos and written guidelines for customers to reserve facilities online.
- Streamline the park permits' website information to provide customers with a more efficient booking experience.
- Analyze information within our customer management software to identify peak times, using that information we can update our training processes.

## V. Program Opportunities Matrix

- [Montgomery Parks Program Inventory Matrix \(1\).xlsx](#)

## VI. Community Inventory

- [MC Community Inventory.xlsx](#)

## VII. Education for Leisure, Health, and Wellness

Montgomery Parks' mission is to protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer various enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places.

Montgomery Parks publishes a newsletter highlighting activities and events that are available to the public. The Parks Weekly Newsletter contains a sampling of upcoming events. Also available are newsletters highlighting events, programs related to sports and outdoors, history and archaeology and nature centers. The newsletter is available by going to our website or signing up on our website to get a regularly emailed newsletter. Below are examples of the newsletters available.

Montgomery County Parks does extensive outreach about health, wellness, and safety in the parks with public service notices regarding how to enjoy and explore the parks safely and participate in various programs and activities.

- [Spring 2024 Program Guide](#)

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Programming to enhance personal health and wellness includes outreach and education highlighting the physical and mental health benefits of various programs and facilities.

- [Heart Smart Trails](#)
- [Strolls for Wellbeing at Brookside Gardens](#)
- [Sunset Yoga](#)
- [Exercise and Fitness Stations](#)

## Parks Weekly Newsletter

[Our Newsletter - Ways to Discover Your Happy Place - Montgomery Parks](#)

[Serenities Await YOU at Sunday Serenades](#)

[Shine Brighter Together with Montgomery Parks](#)

[Break Out Into All Things Spring!](#)

## Nature Centers Newsletters

[Spring is Buzzing With Events! OR De-Stress & Recharge: Your Guide to Strolls for Wellbeing](#)

[Walk Among the Wildflowers with Montgomery Parks](#)

[Fresh Air & Maple Magic: Discover & Explore!](#)

## Sports & Outdoors Newsletters

[Dive into the Winter Fun: Event Centers, Sports and Activities](#)

[Ice, Tennis & Trains! OH MY!](#)

[Shh! Fall Fun Hiding Inside...](#)

## History & Archeology Newsletters

[Empower, Educate, Inspire: Dive into Black History Month!](#)

[Celebrate Maryland Emancipation Day with us!](#)

[Dig into history with Juneteenth, Heritage Days and more Montgomery Parks events!](#)

## Guide

[MONTGOMERY PARKS GUIDE](#)

Montgomery Parks also publishes a seasonal event, class and activity guide and a camp guide where the public can search for specific classes, programs, events and activities by type, location, or other special filter based on interests.

## Other activities and events promoting health and wellness

### With Parks in Mind: Mental Health Awareness Event - Montgomery Parks

Join us for our annual With Parks in Mind: Mental Health Awareness event, a public outdoor celebration of wellness and nature, brought to you by Montgomery Parks in collaboration with EveryMind. This free event aims to promote mental health awareness and well-being through engaging activities amidst the beauty of nature.

We are honored to have Council Member Balcombe in attendance, highlighting the importance of mental health initiatives within our community. This event is a testament to the power of collaboration between local government and community organizations in addressing mental health challenges.

Brookside Gardens offers a variety of Health & Wellness programs for adults, including:

- Weekly yoga and tai-chi classes designed to strengthen muscles, improve balance, and increase flexibility
- Half-day mindfulness retreats
- Shinrin-yoku (Japanese “forest bathing”) to help with stress reduction
- Guided mindfulness walks with integrative therapist Tania Lanning to help you connect with your inner self and with the natural world around you

## Connections between Food and Mental Health Classes

### **Foodie Fridays - Montgomery Parks**

Foodie Fridays, organized by Montgomery Parks Community Garden Program, is a monthly speaker series from June – October focused on highlighting food-related topics in Montgomery County. Events feature farmers, educators, community organizers, food lovers, and changemakers. Attendees have a chance to engage with local food system experts and community members over light food and refreshments.

This year’s Foodie Friday speaker series will focus on the senses – how can we connect with the food system through feeling, smelling, tasting, hearing, and seeing? Speakers will discuss the connections between food and mental health, the role of pollinators in agriculture, forest agriculture and foraging, the historical foodways of Montgomery County and the future of farming in the County.

## Fitness Classes

### **POUND Fitness - Montgomery Parks**

Unleash your inner Rockstar! POUND is a drumming-inspired cardio workout that uses Ripstix (lightly weighted drumsticks) to tone your body. Infused with Pilates based movements, strength training and plyometrics, you’ll leave class feeling alive, confident, and strong! It’s a perfect way to de-stress after your workday. Let’s jam to the beat of good music, move your body, and have fun!

# Montgomery Parks 55+ programs are designed with the growing population of older adults in mind.

## Strong and Fit 55+

Join us as we partner with “Age Well Senior Fitness” to promote physical fitness and wellness. Participants will utilize our beautiful open space, trails, and outdoor fitness equipment to improve their balance, muscular strength, and flexibility while enjoying the benefits of exercising in a natural environment. Instructors have specialized training to provide a safe and effective workout that meets the unique needs of active adults 55+. Soak up the Vitamin D and stay active and healthy. While modifications will be provided to meet the various levels of fitness, this program is designed for individuals who can walk independently without using assistive mobility devices. Participants should bring their own mat and water. 2-5 lb. weights will be provided. Participants may bring their own hand weights if desired.

## Sports Facilities

### Sports - Montgomery Parks

No matter the sport you play, you’ll find top-notch courts, fields, and facilities close by. Our residents love being outside, so whether you’re with a group or by yourself, chances are you’ll find someone to play with.

Our facilities are well maintained and continually upgraded. And while most parks close at sunset, you’ll find an array of lighted courts and fields in the area, so the fun doesn’t have to end when the sun goes down. Plus, dozens of indoor recreational buildings are located throughout the county, so you can get your game on, rain or shine.

Indoor facilities include:

- [Cabin John Ice Rink](#)
- [Pauline Betz Addie Tennis Center](#)
- [Wheaton Ice Arena](#)
- [Wheaton Indoor Tennis Center](#)
- [Wheaton Sports Pavilion](#)

Outdoor facility include: [The South Germantown Driving Range](#) (golf & archery)

## VIII. Evaluation Methods for Recreation Program and Facilities

All programs and events have an evaluation component. For example, Montgomery Parks launched a nature center community input survey for community members to provide feedback about facility hours, types of programs, and types of facility improvements they would like to see at the nature centers. The survey was launched on December 12, 2022, and remained open until January 8, 2023. The Department received over 400 responses as well as extensive comments.

### Nature Centers Community Input Survey (office.com)

This survey helps the Department plan when and where to best offer programming that works for its community, including the expansion of programs for seniors and those with disabilities as we know access to nature is a key component of wellness. We were also seeking input for new initiatives like the Nature on Wheels programming and self-guided hikes and exhibits.

The Brookside Gardens Program Evaluation is another example of a method used by Montgomery Parks for program evaluation. This program employed surveys to determine changes that needed to be made to make the program more effective.

### Brookside Gardens Program Evaluation

Each year every division of Montgomery Parks publishes performance measures in the Proposed Annual Budget.

- M-NCPPC Proposed and Actual Budgets

**Planning** - Every 5 years the Department prepares and updates the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS) for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. This update includes a statistically valid survey and needs assessment.

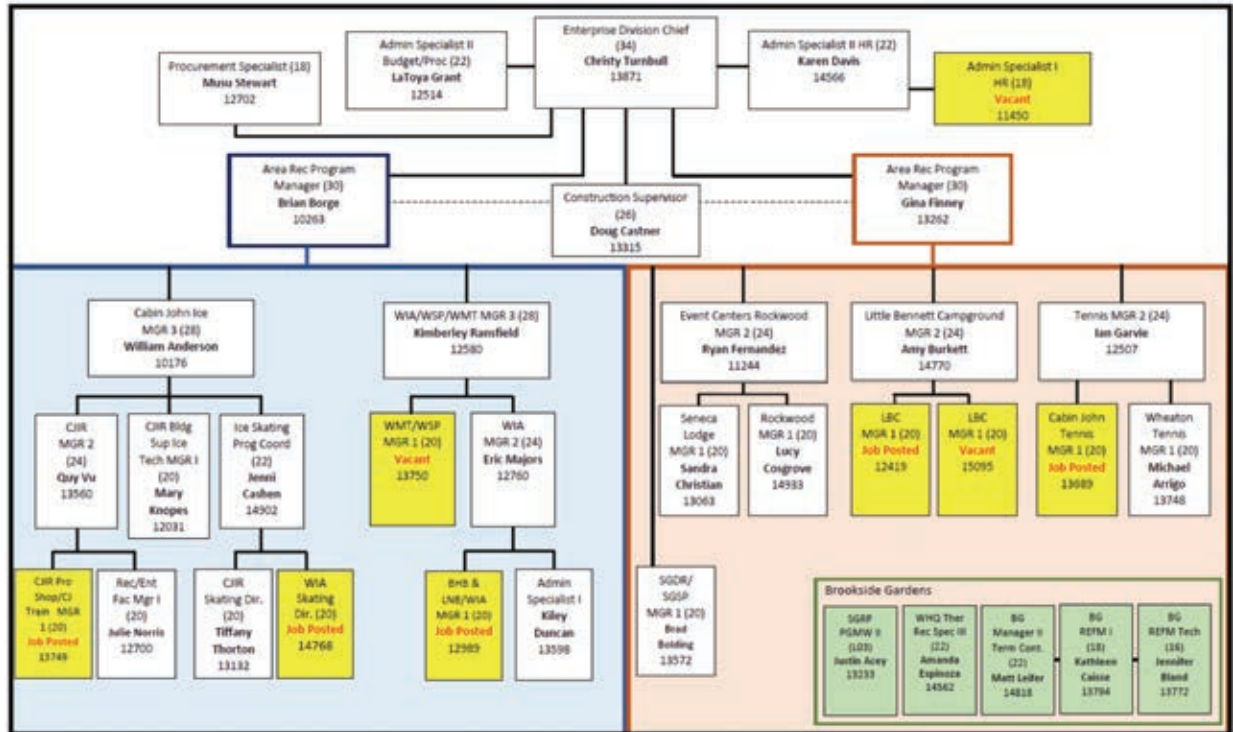
- 2022 PROS Plan

Staff in Parks utilize the PROS plan to determine gaps in programming and services. For example, in the proposed FY25 budget, the Nature Centers requested additional funding to provide more programming for the 55+ community as recommended by the PROS plan.

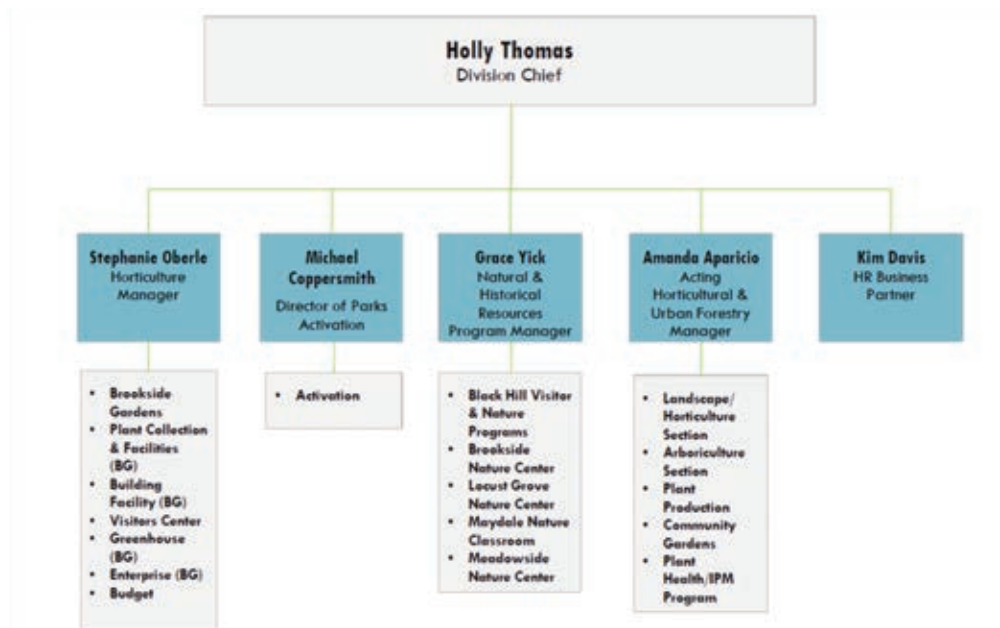


# IX. Appendix – Division Organization Charts (as of Spring 2024)

## Enterprise Division

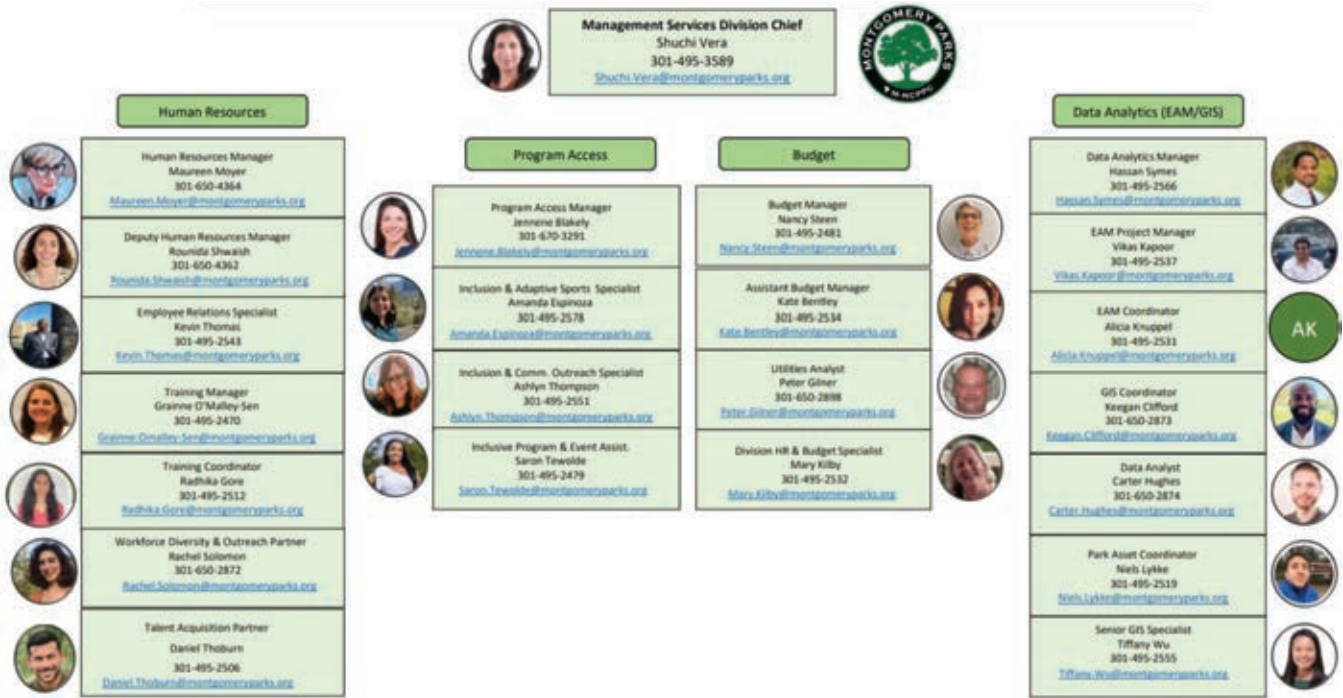


## Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental Education Division

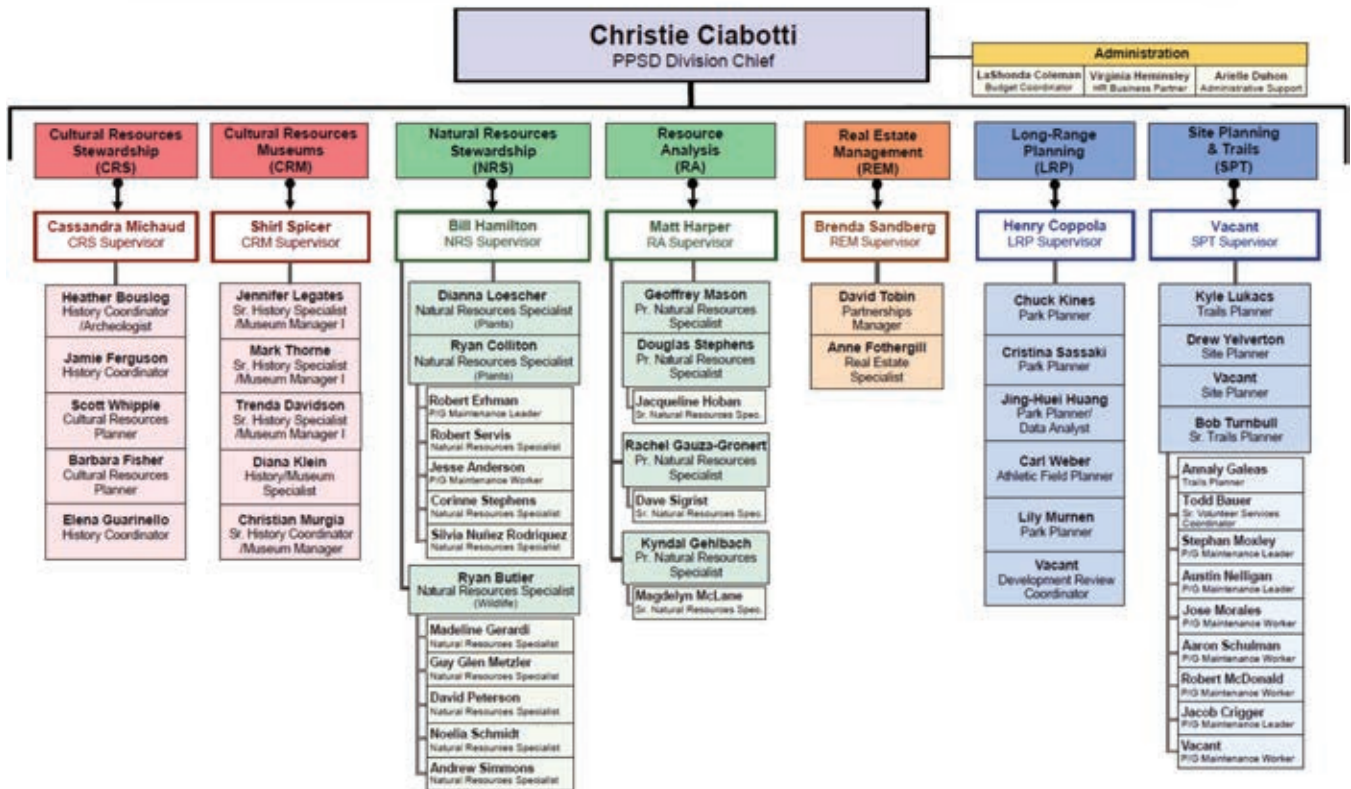


# Management Services Division Organizational and Leadership Structure

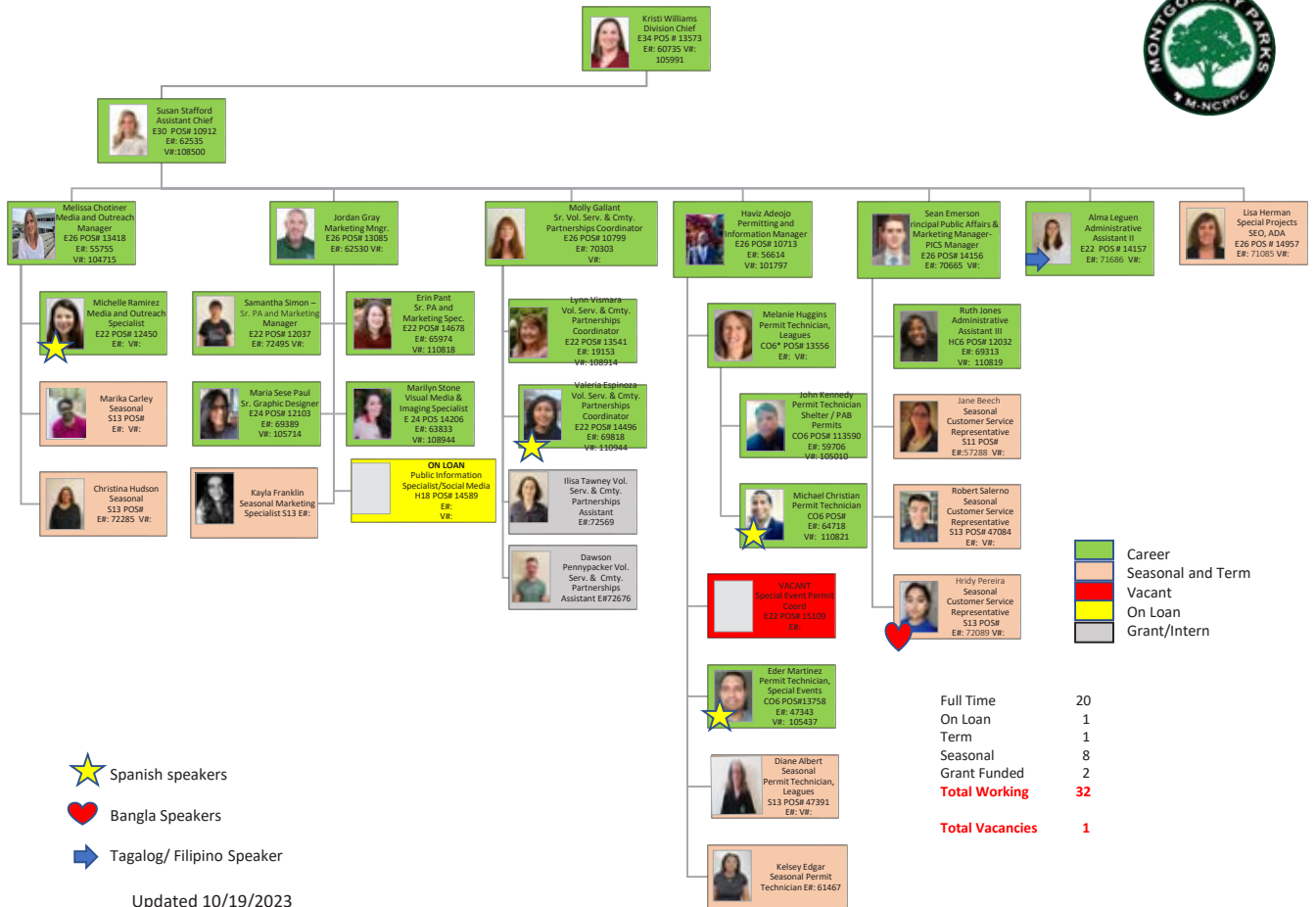
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission - The Montgomery County Department of Parks (rev. March 2024)



# Park Planning and Stewardship Division Organizational and Leadership Structure



# Public Affairs and Community Partnerships (PACP) Organizational Chart





Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County  
Montgomery County Department of Parks














# CRPP Report 2024-Oct29-PRESS-approval

Final Audit Report

2024-11-05


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