

FY23 Capital Budget and FY23-28 CIP for County Government

Testimony by P. Tice

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To: council.publichearing@montgomerycountymd.gov,
county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov

Thank-you Council President Alborno, Vice-President Glass and members of the County Council for this opportunity to suggest changes to the FY23 Capital Budget and FY23-28 CIP.

My name is Patricia Tice. I am a former Board member of the Maryland Native Plant Society, member of the Montgomery County Sierra Club and member of Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions. I have an MS from Rutgers University in Field Ecology where I studied with a world-renowned earth scientist, Professor John Tedrow.

I request that the budgets of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Montgomery Parks be substantially increased expressly for the purpose of funding out-of-stream stormwater control projects outside our stream riparian areas as described below.

For most urban areas like Montgomery County, what goes into our storm drains ([stormwater](#)) makes its way into our local streams. Those streams are part of larger watersheds that lead to major rivers, like the Potomac River, and eventually the Chesapeake Bay. Because our waters are interconnected and not defined by county or state lines, the federal government regulates everything that goes through storm drain systems.

Montgomery County has an MS4 Permit (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit) that mandates the County to meet certain water quality standards.

With a larger budget, DEP and Parks could meet our MS4 Permit with non-destructive out-of-stream projects such as Green Streets (bioretentions, bioswales, etc.), instead of destructive “stream restorations”. A larger budget for DEP would allow the use of more expensive, but environmentally friendly, upland out-of-stream projects. At the same time, this could eliminate the need to use destructive “stream restorations” for MS4 Permit. Montgomery County works to counter the greenhouse gases which are creating the global warming effect in our atmosphere, we are planting hundreds of tree seedlings which will take many years of growth before they are able to capture a significant enough amount of carbon dioxide to make a difference. Yet these MS4 projects are allowing the destruction of acres of stream riparian forests with mature trees already capturing and sequestering CO2 in the soil.

In addition to the destruction of an estimated one million square feet of forests by “stream restorations” constructed under our previous MS4 Permit, “stream restorations” don’t address the root cause of stream bank erosion: stormwater fire-hosing into streams from impervious surfaces such as parking lots, roofs and roads.

Thank you for considering my request that the DEP and Parks budgets be substantially increased expressly for funding of out-of-stream stormwater control projects outside our natural areas.

Sincerely,

Patricia Tice

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