

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

February 14 2022

County Councilmembers:

As part of my role supporting the County-wide Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, I learned that our County Executive released a recommended budget that cut \$19.4 million, or 7.3 percent, from the request that the Parks Department deemed the minimum to adequately support our parks and reduced the requested allocation of Montgomery County general obligation bonds for the parks by 16 percent. These cuts reflect a decreasing priority for the parks at a time when I believe the relative value of our parks to the quality of life of county residents is increasing.

Numerous programs and projects will be impacted by this financial decision, if enacted. Parks staff have remarked that no initiative will be immune. Some of these include delays to the Wheaton Regional Park improvements project, cuts to Legacy Open Space, cuts to road improvements in the parks, and cuts to repairs and improvements to ballfields.

Furthermore, I urge the Council to consider restoring funding to the Parks CIP. Without doing so, planned replacement and repairs for playgrounds, trails, tennis courts, and basketball courts through the County will be dramatically reduced. In addition, there would also be cuts made to the annual funding to support the Vision Zero safety program, just to name one example of a high priority program being impacted.

Montgomery Parks staff can provide more details should you have questions. Please take these budgetary impacts in mind as part of your work on the budget. Thank you for your continued service to our County.

Kind Regards,
Carl Blake, Kensington