

Memorandum

March 30, 2026

From: B. Eugene Neal, Retired Montgomery County Employee  
To: Montgomery County Council  
Subject: Park and Planning's Budget Request

I am B. Eugene Neal, a retired (29 years) Montgomery County Recreation Department Employee, born and raised in Gaithersburg. Although my address is not currently in Montgomery County, I am actively involved with the Firebirds Track Club in which I co-founded in Gaithersburg in 1981, and am an active member of the Mu Nu Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity that serves Montgomery County through a variety of programs including the George B. Thomas Learning Academy (Saturday School).

When I grew up in the Metropolitan Grove Community of Gaithersburg, there were two farms on either side with huge open fields that my community used as a baseball/softball field, a football/soccer field, a long hill that we packed down the snow to convert into the community's sly trail in the winter, and a place that we picked pails of blackberries to make jelly. The cows, of course were at the far ends of the fields when all this took place. These fields are now covered with apartments and townhomes filled with people. The current residents most likely have no idea what their homes displaced just 60 years ago. Everywhere you look in Montgomery County you see new construction of high-rise apartments and townhomes bringing many more residents to the area.

Without well maintained park areas to recreate for the masses of new residents in Montgomery County, we will be creating a breeding ground for more crime and additional mental stress on a population with no place to relax and "breathe". Park and Planning also does an amazing job with informing the residents of the history of our Montgomery County treasure, which I feel is very important for general knowledge.

I am pleading that you approve the entire Park and Planning budget with the entire requested increases, and be proactive to a situation before it becomes a disaster!