



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

This meeting will be held in-person and virtual.

**25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770**

OR

**Virtual Participation
Zoom Webinar Attendees:**

**During "Petitions and Requests," please submit your request in writing via email to
questions@greenbeltmd.gov**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87063809975?pwd=anN1eEZlaWZUb2JmS0hIOHd3eVJIUT09>

Dial-in: 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 870 6380 9975

Passcode: 571832

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

7:30 PM

I. ORGANIZATION 15 minutes (7:30 - 7:45 pm)

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Meditation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
4. Petitions and Requests
5. Consent Agenda - Approval of Staff Recommendations (Items on the Consent

Agenda [marked by *] will be approved as recommended by Council and staff, subject to removal from the Consent Agenda by Council.)

6. Approval of Agenda and Additions

II. COMMUNICATIONS 45 minutes (7:45 - 8:30 pm)

7. Presentations

7a. Ask Me About ARPA Campaign

Suggested Action:

Chondria Andrews, the City's Public Information Office Coordinator, will present to the City Council a PowerPoint presentation on "Ask Me About ARPA" Campaign.

[American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) Marketing Plan.pptx](#)

7b. Adopt A Shelter Cat Month Proclamation

Suggested Action:

The American Humane Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) established Adopt A Shelter Cat Month in 1974 as an annual event to encourage people to save lives and enhance their own lives by adopting a cat from a shelter or rescue group as millions of cats in shelters await adoption every year. The Mayor will present a proclamation proclaiming June as Adopt A Shelter Cat Month.

[Adopt-A-Cat Month23 proc.docx](#)

7c. Pollinator Week Proclamation

Suggested Action:

The Mayor will present a proclamation proclaiming National Pollinator Week is June 19th - 25th, 2023.

[Proclamation-for-National-Pollinator-Week-Greenbelt-2023.docx](#)

*8. Minutes

Suggested Action:

* Regular Meeting, December 14, 2020

* Work Session, November 9, 2022

[RM201214.pdf](#)

[WS221109.pdf](#)

9. Administrative Reports

Suggested Action:

Reference: This link will display the weekly report for the City Manager and City Departments

https://www.greenbeltmd.gov/government/city-administration/city-manager-s-office/weekly-reports/-folder-1475#docan2352_4054_3510

***10. Committee Reports**

***10a. Forest Preserve Advisory Board Report #2023-02 - Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan**

Suggested Action:

Reference: Forest Preserve Advisory Board Report #2023-02
Master Trail Plan Draft June 4, 2023

It is recommended that Council accept this report.

[FPABMasterTrailPlanReport_2023_03.pdf](#)

[2023-02 Attachment __DRAFT Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan - for Council.pdf](#)

III. LEGISLATION

IV. OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

11. Metro's Better Bus Network Redesign

Suggested Action:

Reference:

Memorandum, J. Fearer, 06/15/23

Draft Letter, 06/20/23

WMATA Better Bus Draft Visionary Network Maps

The proposed Better Bus Visionary Network provides service seven (7) days a week, with the exception of the commuter-serving MD440, and the lowest proposed frequency is 30 minutes for any route, including during off-peak times. While this is a positive for Greenbelt, staff notes some critical reductions in connections and service to key locations throughout and adjacent to the City.

Staff recommends the City Council transmit comments to WMATA on the proposed Better Bus Visionary Network including the concerns and considerations outlined in staff's memo.

[23-0620_Better Bus Draft Visionary Network_Staff Memo with Updates_jfearer_FINAL.pdf](#)

12. Selection of Audit Services for FY 2023

Suggested Action:

Reference:

Memorandum, B. Gaymon, 06/15/23
Summary of Auditing Proposals

At the recommendation of the Interim City Manager, the City Treasurer and the Finance Manager, the Mitchell Titus auditing firm is recommended to complete the City's annual audits for the next three years, starting with the fiscal year ending 2023. Subsequent audits would be for the fiscal year ending 2024 and 2025 with an option to extend at the discretion of the City. The Finance Department budgeted \$68,000 in the FY2024 budget to cover auditing costs.

DISCUSSION

On March 21, 2023, the City was informed that our current auditor CohnReznick would no longer be available to conduct the City's annual audit—they are discontinuing services to all state and local governments.

In response to this unexpected notification, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) on April 19, 2023 inviting qualified auditing firms to submit proposals meeting the scope of work stated in the RFP. The RFP was mailed (US Mail) to ten (10) vendors located in the City of Greenbelt; uploaded to the City's website; and published on eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA).

A total of three (3) proposals were received on or before the April 18, 2023 deadline. Fees ranged in price from \$33,345 to \$ 68,000. Since there were fewer than five responses, the staff project team consisting of the City Treasurer; the Finance Manager; and the Interim City Manager held a meeting with each vendor to continue discussions of their respective auditing proposal—to specifically show how their proposed solution would meet the City's needs. All meetings were held on either Wednesday, June 14th and/or on Thursday, June 15th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. for both days.

RECOMMENDATION

While the Project Team believes all firms are qualified to provide excellent auditing services to the City, staff recommends Mitchell Titus, LLP be selected as the City's new auditing firm with an award not to exceed \$64,700 for the first year; \$67,000 for

the second year; and \$69,700 for the third year. Staff believes Mitchel Titus LLP plans and costs represents the highest and best value to the City in terms of service and price.

Mitchell Titus indicates the firm is the nation's largest minority-controlled CPA and business advisory firm and currently serves the Town of La Plata, the City of Mt. Rainier, Maryland General Assembly, Howard County Library System, Harford County Library System and the Town of Dewey Beach, Delaware. In addition, this will be our second year of performing the audit of Maryland's Local Government Insurance Trust. Mitchell Titus confirms the Firm's engagement team has significant experience in delivering ACFRs to the GFOA and emphasizes, one of the partners has been a member of the GFOA for over 20 years.

Another important fact that is helpful to the City is the engagement partner worked for the former audit firm and had a key role in performing the City's financial statement audits in the past—this is a benefit that no other firm can provide and this should help ensure that the audits will be executed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

[Memorandum, B. Gaymon, 06/15/23.pdf](#)

[Copy of Summary of Auditing Proposals bg v2.pdf](#)

13. Maryland Municipal League (MML) Legislative Action Requests (LARs)
Suggested Action:

Reference: MML LAR 2019-2023
MML LAR Form

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) is beginning to gear up for the 2024 legislative session and seeking Legislative Action Requests (LAR) from municipalities. The LAR form is now available and needs to be submitted by Friday, June 30, 2023. Each municipality is limited to a maximum of three legislative solutions to municipal problems submitted through the LAR process to be considered by the MML legislative committee as a potential League priority.

[MML LAR - 2019-2023.pdf](#)

[MML LAR form.pdf](#)

14. Council Activities
15. Council Reports
- *16. * Meetings
[meetings.pdf](#)

*17. * Stakeholder List
[Stakeholder Schedule.pdf](#)

*18. * Resignation from Advisory Group
Suggested Action:
Reference: Email - J. Parker

Judy Parker have submitted her resignation from the Arts Advisory Board (AAB).

Approval of this item on the consent agenda will indicate the Council's intent to accept her resignation with regret.

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Bonita Anderson

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Presentations

Agenda Section: COMMUNICATIONS 45 minutes (7:45 - 8:30 pm)

Subject:

Ask Me About ARPA Campaign

Suggested Action:

Chondria Andrews, the City's Public Information Office Coordinator, will present to the City Council a PowerPoint presentation on "Ask Me About ARPA" Campaign.

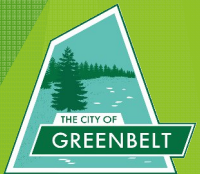
Attachments:

[American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) Marketing Plan.pptx](#)

Ask Me About ARPA Marketing Campaign

PHASE 2

V2.0



Ask Me About ARPA Marketing Campaign (Phase 2)

GOAL:

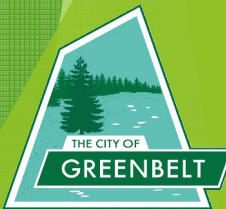
To increase the awareness and impact of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) projects, programs and grant opportunities.

ACTION:

To engage the City Council, City staff and city stakeholders to act as ambassadors raising awareness of ARPA at the City's planned events.

TIMELINE:

Launching end of June



Current Marketing Tools

- ▶ Greenbelt News Review Story & Weekly Ads
- ▶ Flyers
- ▶ Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn & Twitter)
- ▶ Yard Signs
- ▶ Comcast/Verizon Ad Carousel
- ▶ Website (Main and ARPA)
- ▶ City Connector
- ▶ Postcards via Economic Development
- ▶ Email Blasts
- ▶ Word of Mouth
- ▶ Council Meetings
- ▶ Council Ambassadors

GREENBELT
News Review
An Independent Newspaper



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Marketing Campaign (Phase 2)

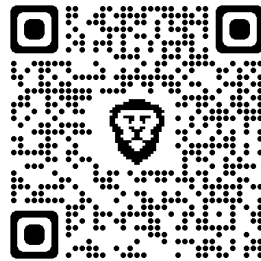
TAGLINE:

“ASK ME ABOUT ARPA”

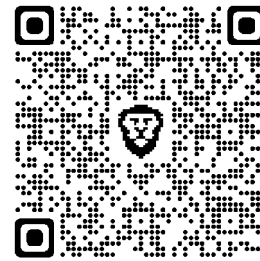
The new marketing tools will include a QR code with a link directly to all of the current grant opportunities.



Engage Greenbelt Website



Engage Greenbelt
Grants Website



Greenbelt Grants
ARPA Website



New Marketing Tools

- ▶ T-Shirts
- ▶ Old Greenbelt Theater Screen Ad
- ▶ Business Cards
- ▶ Buttons
- ▶ Gate Ad/PSA
- ▶ Social Media Targeted Marketing Ads



Ask Me
ABOUT ARPA



ARPA AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

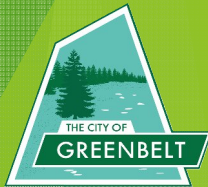


LAUNCHING AT THE END OF JUNE





Questions?



City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Proclamation

Agenda Section: COMMUNICATIONS 45 minutes (7:45 - 8:30 pm)

Subject:

Adopt A Shelter Cat Month Proclamation

Suggested Action:

The American Humane Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) established Adopt A Shelter Cat Month in 1974 as an annual event to encourage people to save lives and enhance their own lives by adopting a cat from a shelter or rescue group as millions of cats in shelters await adoption every year. The Mayor will present a proclamation proclaiming June as Adopt A Shelter Cat Month.

Attachments:

[Adopt-A-Cat Month23 proc.docx](#)

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Adopt a Shelter Cat Month was established by the American Humane Society in 1974 as a month that marks the height of “kitten season”, when millions of kittens are born and often end up in animal shelters;

WHEREAS, Adopt a Shelter Cat Month became an annual event to encourage people to adopt a cat from a shelter or rescue group; and

WHEREAS, millions of cats in shelters are awaiting adoption and for someone to give them a safe, loving home; and

WHEREAS, the City of Greenbelt promotes Adopt a Shelter Cat Month through its Animal Shelter and Animal Control Department; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Emmett V. Jordan, by the authority vested in me by the residents and City Council of Greenbelt, do hereby issue declare the month of June to be

ADOPT A SHELTER CAT MONTH

in Greenbelt and urge our residents to visit our local shelter, inquire about volunteer opportunities, provide financial donations and supplies to help homeless pets in our community, and consider adopting a shelter cat or another pet this month.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Greenbelt, Maryland, to be affixed this 20th day of June 2023.

EMMETT V. JORDAN
Mayor

ATTEST:

Bonita Anderson
City Clerk

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Proclamation

Agenda Section: COMMUNICATIONS 45 minutes (7:45 - 8:30 pm)

Subject:

Pollinator Week Proclamation

Suggested Action:

The Mayor will present a proclamation proclaiming National Pollinator Week is June 19th - 25th, 2023.

Attachments:

[Proclamation-for-National-Pollinator-Week-Greenbelt-2023.docx](#)

City of Greenbelt PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, pollinators such as thousands of species of bees are essential partners in producing much of our food supply; and

WHEREAS, pollinators provide significant environmental benefits that are necessary for maintaining healthy, diverse ecosystems in towns and cities; and

WHEREAS, pollination plays a vital role for the trees and plants of our community, enhancing our quality of life, and creating recreational and economic development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Greenbelt manages parks, public landscaping, and other public lands that may include greenways and wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, the City of Greenbelt provides recommendations to developers and residents regarding landscaping to promote wise conservation stewardship, including the protection of pollinators and maintenance of their habitats;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Emmett V. Jordan, Mayor of the City of Greenbelt, do hereby proclaim the week of June 19th – 25th, 2023 as our municipality's observance of

National Pollinator Week

and, as Greenbelt is an affiliate of **Bee City USA®**, do urge all residents to recognize this observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Greenbelt, Maryland, to be affixed this 20th day of June 2023.

Emmett V. Jordan, Mayor



City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Bonita Anderson

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Meeting Minutes

Agenda Section: COMMUNICATIONS 45 minutes (7:45 - 8:30 pm)

Subject:

Minutes

Suggested Action:

* Regular Meeting, December 14, 2020

* Work Session, November 9, 2022

Attachments:

[RM201214.pdf](#)

[WS221109.pdf](#)

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held December 14, 2020.

Mayor Byrd called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL was answered by Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Colin A. Byrd.

ALSO PRESENT were Nicole Ard, City Manager; Davis Moran, Assistant City Manager; Todd Pounds, City Solicitor; Mary Johnson, Director of Human Resources; Dale Worley, Director of Information Technology; Dr. Liz Park, Director of CARES; Terri Hruby, Director of Planning and Community Development; Holly Simmons, Community Planner; Chief Rick Bowers, Greenbelt Police Department; and Luisa Robles, Sustainability Coordinator.

Mayor Byrd asked for a moment of silence in memory of residents who passed since the last meeting. Council then led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

CONSENT AGENDA: *** Due to technical difficulties, vote to approve the consent agenda wasn't captured****

Council thereby took the following actions:

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Board of Elections Report #20-1 – (Post Election 2019 Report to Council): Council accepted this report.

Board of Elections Report #20-2 – (Recommendation to Amend Section 8-4 of City Code: Mail-in Voting Procedures): Council accepted this report.

Community Relations Advisory Board – Communication to City Council: Council accepted this Report.

Resignation from Advisory Group:

Council accepted Valerie Elliott's resignation from the Forest Preserve Advisory Board and Sherry Burks's resignation from the Community Relations Advisory Board with regret.

Community Center – News Review Lease: Council approved the renewal of the Greenbelt News Review Lease Agreement.

Contract Renewal for Red Light Camera System: Council approved to renew the annual agreement.

Employee Special Holiday: Council approved granting an extra floating holiday to classified City employees.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *** Due to technical difficulties, the vote to approve the agenda wasn't captured****

PRESENTATIONS:

America Recycles Day Proclamation: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. Mayor Byrd proclaimed November 15 as America Recycles Day. Dr. Luisa Robles, Sustainability Coordinator, accepted the proclamation and provided an overview of this year's activities. Mr. Orleans suggested that the City Council consider a resolution requesting producer responsibility for the production of plastic bags.

Jill Grant & Associates: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. Ms. Hruby introduced Jill Grant and Associates. Ms. Grant provided brief remarks.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS:

Laura Rosenthal – read a statement from Lucy Silver, asking the City Council how the City was going to protect residents from being evicted or help the residents that had been evicted. How would the City address a surge of homelessness?

Bill Orleans – requested Council to reconsider and reintroduce the Eviction Freeze Ordinance and have further discussion.

Mr. Roberts moved to special order items, #15, SCMAGLEV Public/Agency Coordination Plan – Updated October 2020; #16 SCMAGLEV Action Request: Writing: Campaign to Request Extended DEIS Commenting Period; and #17 PG 406-21: Prince George's County – Land Use – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System Siting (Prince George's County Stop the Maglev Act 2021). Mayor Byrd seconded. There was a discussion. The motion passed 7-0.

SCMAGLEV Public/Agency Coordination Plan – Updated October 2020: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. There was a discussion. Ms. Davis moved that Council draft a letter to the manager of the Environmental Division of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Mr. Jordan seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

SCMAGLEV Action Request: Writing Campaign to Request Extended DEIS Commenting Period: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. There was a discussion. Ms. Davis moved that Council draft a letter and send it to the appropriate agencies and elected officials requesting an extension of the DEIS commenting period. Mr. Jordan seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

PG 406-21: Prince George's County – Land Use – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System Siting (Prince George's County Stop the Maglev Act of 2021): Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. Ms. Davis moved that Council send the letter. Mr. Jordan seconded. There was a discussion. The motion passed 7-0.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS: none

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Ms. Ard noted that the staff is working on a Utility Fund and congratulated Joe McNeil on his upcoming retirement. Mr. Jordan stated that the contractors on Cherrywood Lane were blocking the bike lane. Ms.

Davis requested a congratulatory letter to Delegate Nicole Williams on her appointment to the Crime Classification and Penalties Task Force. In addition, Ms. Davis congratulated on behalf of Council the Firefighter of the Year, Lisa Hedgewood; Police Officers of the Year, Detective Brown and Detective Fernandez; Civilian of the Year, Nelly Ortiz; and Public Works Safety Responder of the Year, Richard Sorzano.

LEGISLATION:

City of Greenbelt Apartment Electric Security Ordinance: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. There was a discussion. Ms. Davis moved to table the discussion until Council received legal responses and held a work session. Ms. Pope seconded. The motion passed 7-0. There was additional discussion.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Improved Medicare for All: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. There was a discussion. Mayor Byrd moved that Council send a letter to County Council asking to pass a resolution in support of Improved Medicare for All to show local support for single-payer health care, seeking, to gain the help of the City's Federal Delegation, including the Senators. Mr. Jordan seconded. There was a discussion. Mayor Byrd withdrew his motion. He stated that Council would schedule a work session.

Mental Health Support: Ms. Ard read the agenda comments. There was a discussion. Mr. Jordan moved that Council consolidate two part-time positions into one full-time job and add budgetary resources. Ms. Pope seconded. There was additional discussion. The motion passed 7-0.

Construction and Operation of a Currency Production Facility at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Draft: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. Ms. Pope moved that Council submit a letter to include a list of the City's critical issues with the DEIS to the US Army Corps of Engineers firmly stating the City's opposition to the proposed alternative under consideration and stating the City's support for the No Action alternative to enable a reconsideration of the Purpose and Need statement and the other options under consideration. Ms. Davis seconded. There was a discussion. The motion passed 7-0.

Appointment of Council Members to Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Board and Policy Committees: Mayor Byrd read the agenda comments. Ms. Mach moved that Council resume their current appointments. Ms. Pope seconded. There was a discussion. Mr. Roberts moved that the alternates should be able to share dual roles in the meetings. Mayor Byrd seconded. There was additional discussion. The motion to amend failed 1-6 (Mayor Byrd, Mr. Jordan, Ms. Davis, Ms. Mach, Ms. Pope, and Mr. Putens). The motion assed 6-1 (Mr. Roberts).

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES:

- COG Audit Committee – Mr. Jordan
- University of Maryland Smart Coalition Meeting – Mr. Jordan
- NLC First Tier Suburb Planning Committee - Mr. Jordan
- County Commission for Women Meeting; Legislative Committee Meetings – Ms. Davis
- 295 Coalition Meeting – Ms. Davis
- Central Maryland Transportation Mobility Commission Meeting – Ms. Davis
- COG Annual Meeting – Mr. Jordan, Ms. Davis and Ms. Mach
- MML Legislative Committee Meeting – Ms. Davis
- GIVES Quarterly Meeting – Ms. Davis
- 33rd Annual Public Safety Awards, Greenbelt American Legion – (Ms. Davis, Mr. Jordan, Ms. Mach, Mr. Putens, and Ms. Pope)

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Ms. Davis provided a report on the MML Legislative Committee meeting she attended.

MEETINGS: Council reviewed the meeting schedule.

Mr. Jordan moved that Council schedule a Closed Session on Wednesday, December 23, 2020, at 8:00 pm via Zoom. Council will hold this closed meeting in accordance with the General Provisions Article 3-305(b)(1) of the Annotated Code of the Public General Laws of Maryland to discuss a personnel matter – City Manager compensation. Ms. Davis seconded.

ROLL CALL:	Ms. Davis	-	Yes
	Mr. Jordan	-	Yes
	Ms. Mach	-	Yes
	Ms. Pope	-	Yes
	Mr. Putens	-	Absent
	Mr. Roberts	-	No
	Mayor Byrd	-	Yes

The motion passed 5-1 (Mr. Roberts).

Mr. Jordan moved that Council schedule a Closed Session on Monday, January 4, 2021, at 7:30 pm via Zoom. Council will hold this closed meeting in accordance with the General Provisions Article 3-305(b)(1) of the Annotated Code of the Public General Laws of Maryland to discuss a personnel matter – City Manager evaluation process. Ms. Davis seconded.

ROLL CALL:	Ms. Davis	-	Yes
	Mr. Jordan	-	Yes
	Ms. Mach	-	Yes

Ms. Pope	-	Yes
Mr. Putens	-	Absent
Mr. Roberts	-	No
Mayor Byrd	-	Yes

The motion passed 5-1 (Mr. Roberts).

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Mach and seconded by Ms. Pope. The motion carried 6-0. The Mayor adjourned the regular meeting of December 14, 2020, at 10: 27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen
Assistant to the City Clerk

"I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct report of the regular meeting of the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, held December 14, 2020.

Colin A. Byrd
Mayor

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, November 9, 2022, to meet with Beltsville Agricultural Research Center representatives.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:30 pm. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 25 Crescent Road, and virtually via Zoom.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Colin A. Byrd (7:32 pm), Judith F. Davis, Ric Gordon, Silke I. Pope, Rodney M. Roberts, Kristen L. K. Weaver, and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Tim George, Interim City Manager; Terri Hruby, Director of Planning and Community Development; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Assistant to the City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Howard Zhang, Director of Beltsville Agricultural Research Center; Chizo Irechukwu, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Property Manager; and others.

Mr. Roberts expressed his concerns regarding the Log Lodge at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), which included a broken water pipe, the building door being left unsecured, and mulch piled up against the structure. Dr. Zhang stated that a historic event occurred at the Log Lodge, where a United States President and a Russian President conducted a meeting at that location. He advised that BARC receives \$100,000 in funding to maintain the Log Lodge.

Mr. Roberts left the meeting at 7:42 pm.

There was additional discussion regarding the Log Lodge. Dr. Zhang explained that BARC was formed at the current location in 1910 and that the majority of BARC's buildings was constructed in the 1930s. He noted that one of the issues of maintaining old buildings is the maintenance cost due to more things starting to fail. Renovations are complete to Building #307, and there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on December 5. Council is invited.

There was discussion regarding BARC's Master Plan. Dr. Zhang stated that the most recently published Master Plan included the proposal of several buildings, which included the Biotechnology Building (Building 230), two Nutrition Buildings (306B and 306C), and buildings 10A and 10B that were constructed in the late 1990s. He explained the internal 2018 BARC Master Plan and discussed the consolidation of the BARC campus. Dr. Zhang stated that the campus merger would result in a 41% reduction of BARC's building footprint. A Demolish Plan was proposed, including 118 buildings, and the information was submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust. The new Master Plan, BARC will be awarded to a consulting company to be developed.

Based on a question asked by Ms. Davis, Dr. Zhang explained that the new Master Plan would be a four-year process and explained the steps, including building assessments and defining BARCs research needs.

Based on a question by Mayor Jordan, Dr. Zhang explained that BARC had no plans to reduce the land mass, and there are 180 senior scientists. He stated that 40 positions were filled within the last two years and there is active recruitment for open vacancies. Dr. Zhang noted before the

pandemic that 900 employees worked on the campus each day, with 300 of the employees being contractors or collaborators.

Lore Rosenthal, 2 Ct Gardenway, asked if BARC was more cutting edge using traditional or organic farming methods. Dr. Zhang explained that BARCs research in the last 50 years is in tune with large-scale farming operation. The main focus is to improve the yield. In addition, he noted that BARC has been researching the diversity of crops due to climate change.

There was additional discussion regarding the Master Plan. Dr. Zhang explained getting support for implementing the Master Plan. He noted that the Master Plan had been developed with stakeholders and agency leadership input.

Mayor Jordan inquired how BARC fared with funding requests from Congress. Dr. Zhang answered that BARC had received a healthy increase over the last several years, which included a cost increase for employees and a \$2 million in research/programming increase. Based on a question asked by Ms. Davis, Dr. Zhang explained that the Research Appropriation Funds fund the operation or maintenance of the Center. The researchers are charged an indirect cost for the process of maintenance. He noted that significant facility renovation comes from the Congressional Appropriation Fund and the Agricultural Research Service. Dr. Zhang pointed out a third source of funding for the cleanup projects received from the US Department of Agricultural.

Based on a question by Mayor Jordan, Dr. Zhang answered that 50-60% of the Super Fund Sites on the BARC campus are mediated. He explained several processes to mediate the area, including removing the soil and isolating the ground.

Mayor Jordan inquired how BARC evaluates environmental impact projects now and in the future. Dr. Zhang stated that the current research laws should be acceptable. BARC has a rigorous disposal process.

There was discussion regarding wastewater treatment. Dr. Zhang explained that BARC has two wastewater plants on campus and has been regularly meeting the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations without a violation in the last few months.

There was discussion regarding relocating the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) to the BARC campus and the environmental impacts it may cause. Dr. Zhang shared that the BEP project has taken into consideration cutting down trees, reduced parking, and solar roofs. The water process is strictly controlled.

Based on a question by Mayor Jordan, Dr. Zhang explained that Congress must approve any usage of BARC land for nonagricultural use. He stated that BARC had provided 74 or 75 comments to the Maryland Department of Transportation. Ms. Davis asked whether the City could receive a copy of BARC's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) comments. Dr. Zhang replied that the City would have to contact the Maryland Department of Transportation, and he would relay the request to the agency as well.

There was additional discussion regarding the BEP project. Based on a question asked by Ms. Davis, Dr. Zhang explained that the BEP and BARC agreement included the demolition of 29 buildings and will fund the replacement of two functioning buildings.

Based on a question asked by Ms. Davis, Dr. Zhang explained that the State Highway Administration (SHA) asked permission from BARC to expand Kenilworth Avenue/Edmonston Road due to congestion, and the renovation would possibly fund BEP. Ms. Davis stated that the City is opposed to widening the road.

Mayor Jordan asked whether there were any significant upgrades to Powder Mill Road. Dr. Zhang stated that BEP would improve the Baltimore Washington Parkway and Powder Mill Road intersection. Ms. Davis inquired if the truck traffic would impact BARC's research. Dr. Zhang answered that the rumble strips have the most significant impact on BARC's study. He noted that BARC has been discussing possibly removing the rumble strips.

Mayor Jordan expressed his opinion that Beaver Dam Creek Road should be a limited access road for BARC, cyclists, and hikers. Dr. Zhang acknowledged Mayor Jordan's concern regarding safety due to speeding vehicles. The United States Park Police was asked to make traffic stops and issue speeding citations. Last year, the United States Park Police issued over 200 speeding citations on the BARC campus.

Bill Orleans, a Greenbelt resident, inquired where the other Agricultural Research Centers were located. Dr. Zhang answered that the Agricultural Research Services has over 90 locations, and BARC is the largest. Mr. Orleans asked what was the annual appropriation to BARC. Dr. Zhang stated that the current budget is \$98 million.

Based on a question asked by Robert Goldberg-Strassler, 114 Lastner Lane, Dr. Zhang explained that the BEP project assisted with BARC's Master Plan by reducing the square footage of building space by 1.1 million square feet.

Vijay Parameshwaran, 9 Ridge Road, inquired about the broader mission in research development that BARC foresees in the coming years regarding climate change and food supply change. Dr. Zhang stated that BARC and BEP are transferring the wastewater treatment to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). He noted that BARC conducts two lines of research, coping with the impact of the climate and reducing its effects.

Meeting Discussion:

Council reviewed the upcoming Meeting and Work Session list.

Due to the holidays, Ms. Davis suggested not scheduling any work sessions on December 21st, 26th, and 28th.

There was a discussion regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) projects listed on the upcoming Regular Meeting agenda.

There was a discussion regarding scheduling a Reparations Commission work session. Council agreed to schedule the Reparations Commission Work Session on Tuesday, November 22, 2022.

Mayor Jordan requested placing the following month's Meeting and Work Session in Council packets.

The meeting ended at 10:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Shaniya Lashley-Mullen
Assistant to the City Clerk*

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Board and Committee Reports

Agenda Section: COMMUNICATIONS 45 minutes (7:45 - 8:30 pm)

Subject:

Forest Preserve Advisory Board Report #2023-02 - Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan

Suggested Action:

Reference: Forest Preserve Advisory Board Report #2023-02
Master Trail Plan Draft June 4, 2023

It is recommended that Council accept this report.

Attachments:

[FPABMasterTrailPlanReport_2023_03.pdf](#)

[2023-02 Attachment__DRAFT Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan - for Council.pdf](#)

FOREST PRESERVE ADVISORY BOARD
REPORT TO COUNCIL

Report No. 2023-03

SUBJECT: Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan

DATE: June 4, 2023

BACKGROUND: The Forest Preserve Advisory Board has drafted a Master Trail Plan in accordance with the Greenbelt Forest Preserve Stewardship Guidelines. The Guidelines indicate a need for a formal trail maintenance program to rein in vigilante trail and tree maintenance in the Preserve. This Plan would allow for limited maintenance activities to address trail issues and impacts to the health of the forest. The Board has undertaken this task over the past three years.

DISCUSSION: FPAB has drafted a wholly new guidance and policy document that designates official trails in the Forest Preserve, sets out goals for trail maintenance in the various tracts, describes issues such as trail locations, stream crossings, muddy areas, erosion, blockages and other topics, describes the acceptable methods that may be used to address these issues, and authorizes Public Works to take action when issues are reported. The Stewardship Guidelines acknowledge that trails allow visitors to enjoy the forest but that this access must be managed to minimize the impacts and preserve healthy functioning of the forest ecosystem. This philosophy informs the entire Master Trail Plan.

The attached plan was approved by consent at the FPAB meeting May 25, 2023. This plan represents the work of the existing advisory board: Bryan Bruns, Susan Gregersen, Donna Hoffmeister, Owen Kelley, Damien Ossi, Thomas Doggett, Beth Novick, and John Paul Schmitt, under the leadership of co-chairs Donna Hoffmeister and Damien Ossi. It also represents the work of several former members who have since rotated off the board: Leeann Irwin, Jessica Stewart, and Mary Ann Canter, and the guidance and input of staff liaisons Jason Martin and Kevin Carpenter-Driscoll and Council liaison Jay Davis.

RECOMMENDATION: FPAB asks Council to accept this report, publicize the Master Trail Plan, and schedule a work session to discuss the plan with FPAB and the public. FPAB recommends that this Plan be adopted with minimal changes.

Attachment: DRAFT Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan.

Greenbelt Forest Preserve

Master Trail Plan

Draft June 4, 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Greenbelt Forest Preserve protects more than 260 acres of forested land in six separate tracts (Figure 1). Established in city code by the Greenbelt City Council in 2003, the purpose of the Forest Preserve is to protect the forests in these areas, along with the wildlife and other natural features. A detailed description of each parcel and its history and stewardship goals can be found in the *Forest Preserve Stewardship Guidelines* (City of Greenbelt, 2019). The Forest Preserve is managed by the City of Greenbelt, guided by principles outlined in the Stewardship Guidelines.

When the Forest Preserve was established, the largest parcels in the North and Hamilton Woods were already traversed by a pre-existing, informal network of trails. The trails were not developed based on a master plan, and they have not been maintained by the city. Instead, trails have persisted largely due to public use. Maintenance is performed on an *ad hoc* basis by members of the public, with no coordination by the city. These impromptu trail maintenance activities have included the use of chainsaws to remove large logs, breaking and cutting of brush encroaching the trails, and construction of bridges and walkways over small streams and muddy areas.

When the Forest Preserve was established, the *Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines* were developed by a Forest Preserve Task Force appointed by the Greenbelt City Council. In 2019, the Forest Preserve Advisory Board (FPAB) proposed, and the Council adopted an updated version, renamed the “Stewardship Guidelines.” The Guidelines acknowledge that passive recreation in nature is one reason for the existence of the Preserve, and that wise stewardship of the trail system is needed to minimize the impacts of recreation. The Guidelines also recognize that the current trail system is a source of concern. Briefly, trails have proliferated in the Preserve as new trails are established and old trails are rerouted around obstacles. Unregulated, unsanctioned maintenance has been important in maintaining the trails but is inconsistently carried out and in some cases is more extensive than is warranted. The Guidelines do not provide detailed recommendations for trail management. Rather, the Guidelines instruct FPAB to create a separate Master Trail Plan.

After the Stewardship Guidelines were adopted, the FPAB began work on the Master Trail Plan. After several initial discussions at board meetings, a virtual public scoping meeting was held on September 12, 2020. This meeting was an opportunity for members of the public to state concerns and propose solutions related to trails in the Preserve. During a series of meetings, the FPAB collaboratively produced this Master Trail Plan.

This plan lays out the goals and standards for stewarding and maintaining trails in the Preserve and addressing any issues that arise in the trail system. This plan also designates standards or provides options that the Greenbelt Public Works department should follow to preserve the natural unmanaged appearance of the Preserve. It authorizes the Environmental Coordinator, in coordination with the Public Works Director, to respond to issues that it discovers or issues that are reported by visitors to the Preserve to permit swift action when it would prevent harm to ecosystem health. The standard procedures in this plan are intended to detail the circumstances that warrant intervention, prescribe the techniques that the Environmental Coordinator may use, and limit the amount of disturbance that Public Works may create during maintenance activities.

The plan begins with an overview of trail management. The overview discusses issues to consider when managing trails and how the natural environment and visitor experiences help to set standards for different trails. The next section summarizes the current issues related to trails in the Forest Preserve. These include threats to the natural environment, such as trails traversing ecologically sensitive areas, trash along trails and over-zealous vegetation cutting around trails, as well as issues with trail routing, such as erosion on steep slopes, widening of trails in muddy areas and undercut trails along stream sides. Subsequent sections focus on the trail system in each Forest Preserve. These sections describe the natural resource concerns related to the specific trails in that tract and the desired experience for trail users, and detail issues that visitors may encounter, such as the width of trails, muddy areas, stream crossings, and the size of obstacles. Each of these chapters details the standards that Public Works may use to perform maintenance and address specific issues in that tract in accordance with this document. The final section focuses on how the city can make use of volunteers to carry out many of these activities and procedures for reporting problems.

This plan focuses on the major trails, particularly in the North Woods and Hamilton Woods Tracts. Major trails are those trails that are shown in Figure 2, which is a screenshot of Open Street Map. Open Street Map (www.openstreetmap.org) is an online, open source, community-created map that can be updated as the trail system evolves. The trails shown in Figure 2 are the most commonly used trails in the Preserve and shall be the official trail system of the Forest Preserve as described in the Stewardship Guidelines. These trails should be maintained in accordance with this document. Other trails, referred to as minor trails or social trails in this document, are not part of the official trail system. These may be closed, or their use otherwise discouraged. New trails should not be created by staff, volunteers, or general usage, unless a clear plan is presented to and approved by Council.

Figure 1. Map of the various tracts of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve

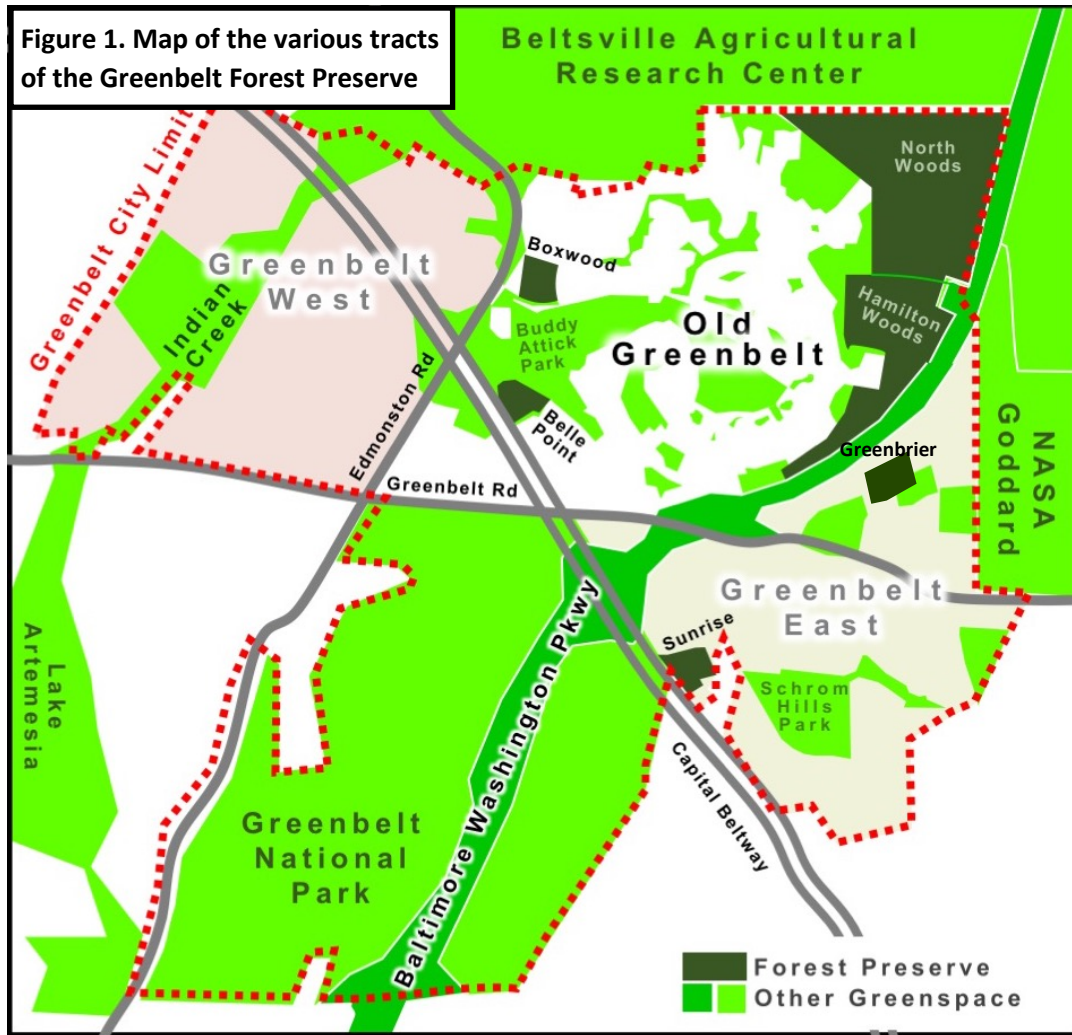
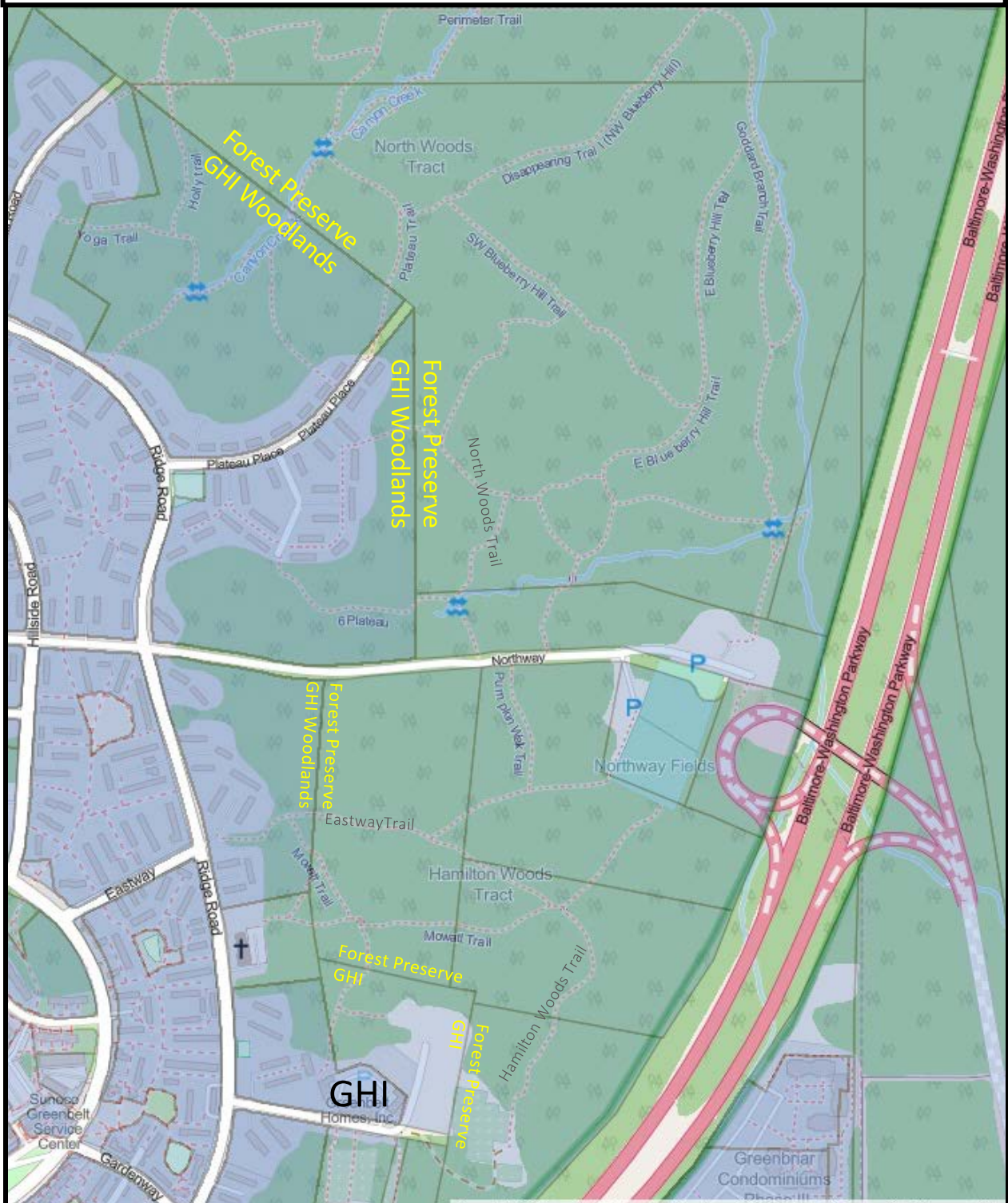


Figure 2. Map of trails in the North Woods and Hamilton Woods tracts of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve. This map is from Open Street Map with parcel boundaries added. These trails are the official major trails of these tracts.



TRAIL MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Why Have Trails?

Trails provide multiple benefits for the Forest Preserve and those who use trails.

- 1) Trails provide access for people to use and enjoy the Forest Preserve, which is a major rationale for having the Preserve.
- 2) Such enjoyment also creates appreciation of and support for the Preserve, which increases public support and helps keep the area protected.
- 3) In practical terms, trails make it easier to find one's way through the woods, with fewer obstacles and less chance of getting lost.
- 4) Trails help preserve forest habitat by efficiently concentrating impacts, such as soil compaction and trampling vegetation, into a narrow corridor. This can greatly reduce the total impact from hikers and make impacts easier to manage by keeping usage on already impacted areas and away from sensitive locations.

Why Manage Trails?

It may seem that trails are relatively permanent features that don't require much management except for occasionally trimming encroaching vegetation. However, if trails are left unmanaged, there can be a variety of negative consequences. These problems can be roughly divided into three basic categories.

- 1) Damage to the environment. Unmanaged trails can cause damage to the surrounding environment in a variety of ways. Once a trail has been established, the surface of the trail becomes compacted and unsuitable for vegetation. Unmanaged trails often grow larger as people expand them to avoid obstacles such as logs and puddles, which results in more loss of vegetation. People and their pets can inadvertently damage sensitive habitats, including wetlands such as vernal pools, seeps, and springs. Trails in a pristine forest are disturbances, and they can be the way that invasive species and trash are spread into the forest.
- 2) Damage to the trails themselves. If trails are unmanaged, erosion and overuse can ruin the trail itself. For example, damage to trails is often associated with poor water management. Trails that go directly downhill can turn into erosion gullies that are difficult to traverse and that ultimately pollute streams with sediment. Low muddy spots where water collects on trails are also problematic. When trail users walk through these areas they can deepen and broaden the mud and damage the trail in the process.
- 3) Detraction from the visitor experience. Trails primarily provide an opportunity for visitors to enjoy nature. Some visitors may not be able to use trails if they are blocked by fallen logs or overhanging plants. Those with limited mobility may be particularly affected by fallen trees, difficulty in avoiding brush and thorns, or muddy areas that are hard to traverse and pose risks of falling. Additionally, areas that are trampled, damaged or have litter detract from the experience of nature.

- 4) Illegal maintenance without oversight, guidance, or accountability. Trail maintenance by trail users is officially prohibited, and there have been no established procedures for maintenance by City staff. As a result, substantial unauthorized maintenance is done on a voluntary basis, without any oversight, guidelines, or accountability. Decisions about how much or how little to do are made individually by people engaged in unauthorized maintenance, without clear criteria about appropriate ways to minimize impacts or prevent future problems.
 - a. A notable and clearly visible part of this is the use of saws, including chainsaws, to cut through trees that fall across trails, with no provision for ensuring skills or safe practices by those using chainsaws. The tendency is to re-establish the existing trail, even when a detour rerouting the trail around the fallen tree might be more desirable in terms of ecology or user experience. Cut logs are usually placed beside the trail, with little attention to aesthetics or impacts on drainage from the trail tread.
 - b. Brush has been kept clear from most trails, typically by trail users bending back or breaking off branches, or cutting them with shears, including branches of holly and other trees, and thorny brush such as greenbrier and multiflora rose.
 - c. Branches and boards have been placed in muddy areas, with the intention to make them easier to cross. However, branches and boards can be ineffective, difficult, or dangerous to walk on and sometimes interfere with drainage and thereby worsen the problem.
- 5) Potentially hazardous areas. The current informal trails include locations where the trail runs along the edge of steep (and sometimes undercut) streambanks, or where trail users must climb up and down to cross entrenched streams and ravines, for instance, the slope down from the Observatory and mulch pile. Unauthorized bridges have been placed in multiple locations, without arrangements for inspection, repair, or replacement.
- 6) Ecologically sensitive areas. There have been no specific policies or procedures to prevent or limit development of informal trails that disturb ecologically sensitive areas.
- 7) Invasive species. Trails can provide an entry route for invasive species. Currently there is no process for monitoring or controlling the spread of invasive species along trails, such as stiltgrass or multiflora rose.

Proper trail management can prevent or minimize these negative consequences. Proper trail routing will protect the environment by avoiding wetlands and other sensitive habitats. Erosion and mud can be avoided by methods such as proper trail placement and minimal maintenance of the trails early when issues first arise. Finally, by keeping trails appropriately cleared, there will be less need for users to expand the trail system to avoid obstacles.

Goals for trail management

The goal for stewarding the trail system of the Forest Preserve is to provide Preserve visitors with hiking opportunities in a natural setting, while ensuring the protection of the surrounding environment. Standards for trail maintenance will be determined by considering both the environment and trail use.

In the Forest Preserve, the environment ranges from relatively undisturbed forest interiors in the North Woods Tract to more disturbed forests in other smaller tracts. Undisturbed areas far from the forest edge generally have fewer invasive plant species and are less likely to have trash, which makes protecting these areas particularly important. Some tracts have steep slopes which are susceptible to erosion, while others do not.

There are a variety of reasons why people visit the Preserve. Users vary from single hikers who are looking for a solitary experience in nature to small groups of family and friends. Some are walking or running for exercise. Others may use trails for walking their dogs while enjoying nature. Occasionally, larger groups will visit the Preserve for educational or cultural activities, such as the annual Halloween Pumpkin Walk. Some users may prefer a more challenging, longer hike with downed logs and similar debris to clamber over. Other users may not be able to hike on trails with significant obstructions.

Not every trail will be ideal for every use. Trails with steep slopes or near sensitive environments are poor choices for large group activities. Trails that are more remote are better suited for solitary and more challenging hiking, whereas trails that are near entrances will generally have higher traffic and could be managed to have fewer obstacles. To the extent possible, the trails system should accommodate users with a variety of athletic abilities and interests.

Standards

To achieve this goal, standards have been set for each tract in the Forest Preserve. Tracts and areas that have the most intact natural environments have standards that focus on minimal maintenance and emphasize protection of the environment. Tracts that are more disturbed are better suited to trails that are more maintained and are easier to traverse. Standards take into consideration the layout of the trail system, the degrees to which obstructions are tolerated and the physical standard for the trails.

The layout of the trail system should avoid ecologically sensitive areas that can be inadvertently damaged by hikers. The trail system should not include unnecessary trails, such as unnecessary informal (aka social) trails, parallel trails that connect the same two points, or confusing junctions that could be simplified. Given the extensive nature of the current trail system, it is unlikely that many new trails will be added, but some existing trails may need to be improved, rerouted, or closed.

Trail obstructions are downed logs and branches that are obstacles for hikers using the trail. Leaving obstructions in place is the least intrusive option, and some hikers enjoy overcoming these obstacles. However, if the obstruction is large enough, hikers will create a new trail to go around it, which is damaging to the environment. Keeping trails obstruction-free is more intrusive and requires more effort but a trail with fewer obstructions is accessible to more people. Later sections in this plan specify the size and types of obstructions that will be removed in each tract.

Each tract will have specific physical standards for the trails. These include the width of the trail, how uneven the trail should be, how steep the trails should be and how wide and tall an area should be

cleared of overhanging vegetation. As with obstructions, there are tradeoffs in minimizing impacts, keeping trails open and the amount of work needed for trail maintenance.

DRAFT

TRAIL PROBLEMS AND MAINTENANCE OPTIONS

This section describes some key problems that are found along the trails in the Preserve and the various options for remediating those problems. These issues fall into several categories: location-based problems, trail creation and blockages, trash, and accessibility. While this section discusses various problems, it should be noted that the existing system of trails in the Forest Preserve seems to be stable and, with some specific exceptions, is in relatively good condition.

The maintenance standards in this document are designed to protect and enhance the natural character of the Forest Preserve and the experience of those using trails. Maintenance standards and activities are based on the *Stewardship Guidelines* for the Greenbelt City Forest Preserve and the ideas presented in other sections of this Plan. Maintenance activities will require a thoughtful and minimalist approach, which will be intended to facilitate appreciation and enjoyment of the Preserve. This includes having trails that are appropriate to the terrain and ecosystems; avoiding or minimizing impacts such as erosion, soil compaction, and damage to vegetation; and enabling safe passage within the Forest Preserve.

This document does not envision or authorize a large amount of modification or additional work on the trail system. Rather, the Plan provides guidelines and standards of care for major trails to keep them available and enjoyable in a sustainable way. For additional information on trail design and maintenance, see the references at the end of this chapter. For a particularly relevant source that discusses physical processes while emphasizing design to fit with and help enjoy nature, see *Natural Surface Trails by Design: Physical and Human Essentials of Sustainable, Enjoyable Trails* by Troy Scott Parker.

Gullied or Eroded Trails

Trails that go straight down steep or shallow inclines and hills can become gullied and eroded. People walking along trails compact the soil and knock leaves and smaller soil particles to the side; such trails develop a “cupped” shape lower than the surrounding areas. When trails slope downhill along a “fall line,” rainfall runoff accumulates and erodes the trail, with large flows gaining much greater erosive power. Eventually this can turn trails into gullies that are unsightly and unpleasant to walk in, since the runoff also erodes soil and damages vegetation.

Maintenance Options: While it is usually impossible to reverse or repair major erosion, various options can prevent or limit erosion and remedy problems with gullied trails.

1. Periodic maintenance can improve drainage from the trail tread by removing accumulated leaves and soil (berm) on the downslope edges and, where feasible, by reshaping the tread to restore the diversion of water off the trail (outslope).
2. New trails or realignment of existing trails can be designed to rise and fall so that the trail tread forms a series of “mini-watersheds” that drain and disperse runoff and prevent concentrated flows.
3. In existing trails, “rolling grade dips” may be installed to move water from the trail. These use a shallow swale and ramp of soil to divert water off the trail into a steeper ditch, swale, or

lower-lying terrain, while keeping the trail easy to walk across. Properly built rolling grade dips can minimize needs for continuing maintenance.

4. Waterbars or steps can be built using wood or stone across trails to divert water and limit erosion. However, waterbars tend to require regular maintenance to remove accumulated debris. Wooden waterbars rot and require periodic reconstruction.
5. Where trails are deeply entrenched, closing and rerouting the trail to one side or the other may be the best solution. In the former trail section, this might involve installing berms, trenches and possible planting to control erosion and promote ecological recovery. Informal shifts in trail location have already occurred, for example, as of 2023, in the uphill sections of the trail connecting the Pumpkin Walk Trail to Eastway Road/44 Court Ridge Road.

Wetlands and Persistently Muddy Areas

Trails that go through low wet areas can become mud pits. People try to avoid muddy areas by going around them, which often results in trampling of vegetation and widening of trails. Where branches or boards are put down to provide a place to walk, these can sometimes further obstruct drainage and worsen drainage problems. Often these trails are also traveling through sensitive habitats such as seeps, bogs, and wetlands.

Maintenance Options: It may be appropriate to accept that some portions of trails will be temporarily flooded and unusable for periods of time during and after heavy storms, while still being available most of the time. This is often the case for less popular trails that do not show any signs of widening.

1. Maintenance and minor reshaping of trail tread and drainage into ditches or swales may be sufficient to reduce or eliminate some persistently muddy areas.
2. If the topography permits, trails may be realigned to go around wetlands, such as seeps, springs, and low-lying areas, where water tends to collect.
3. Log cross-sections (“tree cookies”) can be placed like steppingstones to facilitate crossing muddy areas. Narrow board walkways, elevated on cross-pieces, can also be a practical way to enable comfortable passage along a trail through wetlands, while allowing water to stand or flow underneath. Supporting cross-pieces are aligned parallel to the flow, with an elevated trimmed log or board on top at right angles to the flow.
4. In some cases, culverts can provide drainage underneath a trail. Culverts can be designed to be unobtrusive but do require periodic maintenance. Adverse impacts from drying out wetland habitats should be considered and avoided, especially for sensitive habitats such as seeps and vernal pools.

Stream Crossings

The Preserve has a variety of ephemeral and permanent streams and drainage channels, some of which are deeply channelized. Ephemeral streams flow only intermittently after rains. For some trail users, stream crossings may be challenging or make it impossible to use the trail. Bridges can make it easier to cross streams, and several bridges exist at stream crossings. Bridges require construction and may detract from the natural experience. Bridges also require monitoring and repair to keep them safe and sound. Bridge construction risks creating a cycle of further construction to improve, protect, or rebuild bridges that become increasingly large and elaborate.

Maintenance options: It may be wiser and more consistent with a natural experience to accept that streams may become temporarily difficult or impossible to cross during and after heavy rains, requiring trail walkers to use alternate routes.

1. Stream crossings can be stabilized by building steps to provide sound footing for going up and down stream banks, including reinforcement using logs to facilitate crossing the stream. This kind of improvement of stream crossings can also help keep users on a single path and so reduce damage to vegetation and erosion of stream banks.
2. Bridges may be constructed at selected locations on major trails, or existing bridges that were built without authorization may be retained, especially in the Hamilton Woods, which is considered an appropriate area to support educational and other organized activities.
3. Retain the “Diving Board Bridge” in the Hamilton Woods. It has become part of local folklore and history, even if it is somewhat discordant with the intended natural character of the Preserve.

Steep Stream Banks and Slopes

Several streams in the Preserve are deeply channelized, often six or more feet below the surrounding land. In some cases, trails run directly adjacent to high stream banks that are undercut. Some streamside trails also go down slopes at a very steep grade, making them difficult and potentially hazardous to use. Contemporary approaches to trail design tend to avoid following directly along the edges of streams, cliffs, or water bodies, and instead usually keep the trails some distance away with occasional short spur trails, where trail users can go and enjoy a view.

Maintenance options: Close, reroute, or realign trail.

1. Trails can be closed or rerouted where seriously undercut or too steep to easily traverse.
2. In some cases, a modest realignment of the trail could provide enough setback from the edge of a stream or slope. For example, as of 2023, some of the trails along Goddard Branch already stay six to ten feet away from the edge while still allowing a view of the stream.
3. Where trails are located on steep slopes, construction of new trail at a more gradual grade, possibly with switchbacks, is an option.

Sensitive Habitats and Hazardous Areas

Some ecosystems, such as springs, seeps, vernal pools, and wetlands along streams, may contain rare species and are particularly sensitive to the impact of people walking through them. Other areas in the Preserve contain archeological features and old dumpsites with rusty metal, broken glass, barbed wire, and other hazards. In both such cases trails should avoid sensitive or hazardous areas and minimize usage, particularly by those unaware of these risks and how to avoid them. Increased trail usage from 2020-2023 has created or expanded some trails that approach or go through sensitive habitats.

Major trails can be pro-actively maintained to encourage users to keep to suitable trails. One example (as of 2023) would be to maintain a single major trail along the west side of Goddard Branch and to discourage visitors from going on the east side of the stream. Another example would be to maintain the current major trail leading north from the Hamilton Community Gardens and discourage development of side trails into the adjoining former dumpsite areas.

Maintenance options: When trails enter areas with sensitive habitats, there are several options for minimizing harm.

1. Sensitive areas deserving protection can be identified and designated.
2. Trailhead signage can encourage visitors to keep to the trails and discourage entering sensitive areas.
3. Trails leading into or near sensitive areas may be closed, rerouted, or modified to limit or discourage use.

Social Trails

Social trails are minor trails or trail segments that are created by people as they cut corners at trail junctions, find new paths around blockages, move away from eroding stream banks, or simply take a new direction in the forest. Trail junctions become unnecessarily complicated, when “triangular” junctions are created by such shortcuts. Braided trails with multiple parallel paths may occur when a trail is blocked, or a trail travels too close to an eroded stream bank. These issues can amplify impacts on vegetation and wildlife habitat and make navigation more confusing. New trails are also created, when enough people desire to hike to a new location or create access to a new part of the forest. Creation of new social trails can lead to greater impacts on habitat, increased erosion, and other issues, and is therefore discouraged.

Maintenance options:

1. Maintenance should be done so it encourages use of the major trails and discourages use of social (minor) trails.
2. Unnecessary or damaging trails should be closed or re-rerouted to reduce users’ impacts on the forest.
3. New trails of all types should be carefully considered and only approved where there are strong reasons for doing so.
4. A degree of redundancy could be tolerated as an aspect of the trail network that developed informally.
5. Where there is no strong reason to have a divided trail, one branch can be kept and the other closed off. Similarly, for a network of braided trails (such as along Goddard Branch) one route could be designated as a primary trail. The other braided trails might be closed off, or more subtly discouraged by pro-active maintenance of the main route.
6. Junctions could be simplified, for example to make a simple “T” or “X” shaped trail intersection, closing off redundant routes. This can also make it easier to notice and remember junctions for safe navigation and return.
7. Trails may be closed using brush and other treatments. Temporary signage may be used confirm the change and point users in the correct direction. Activities to facilitate environmental restoration could include digging to de-compact soil, creating small trenches and berms to promote rainfall infiltration and reduce erosion, and transplanting vegetation, such as saplings or shrubs.

Fallen Trees and Other Trail Blockages

Fallen trees are a natural occurrence and an important part of forest ecosystems. However, such “blowdowns” may block trails and can be unstable and hazardous to those trying to go over, under, or

through them. Where people detour around blowdowns this can unnecessarily compact soils and trample vegetation. If sawn logs from fallen trees are not appropriately arranged, they can appear ugly and unnatural and may obstruct drainage.

Maintenance options:

1. Fallen trees should be promptly reported and assessed, so the situation can be addressed before people create informal detours. The assessment should consider whether rerouting the trail might be easier or more desirable, including making the trail more interesting and better fitted to the landscape and scenery.
2. If rerouting seems the best choice, then a new route should be temporarily marked with flagging tape and perhaps temporary signage. Where necessary, vegetation might be cleared along the new trail route. On sloping land, the new trail tread may need to be shaped to make it easier and safer to walk and to facilitate drainage. Current approaches to trail design tend to favor building trails along sloping areas, to better manage drainage, so this could be a consideration in realigning trails around fallen trees.
3. If reopening the existing trail alignment seems like the best choice, then branches and tree trunks obstructing the trail should be cleared away within a specified clearance area. Trees may be left in place where they are relatively easy to step across, such as tree trunks or branches up to a specified height above the trail, e.g., 12 inches. In many cases manual tools such as loppers and handsaws are sufficient to make the trail passable again. Chainsaws may need to be used (by qualified operators) for larger tree trunks and branches or blowdowns of multiple trees.
4. The presence of dead trees and branches above and beside trails is normal for a natural forest and accords with the purposes and principles for managing the Forest Preserve. Trailhead signage might warn hikers of the risks of falling limbs and the danger of using trails during storms or high winds. In exceptional cases, pro-active steps might be taken to remove dangling limbs or trees precariously overhanging trails, if these seem to pose a high risk.

Branches and Brush in Trails

The major trails in the Preserve appear to have been kept open through informal maintenance such as pruning, bending back, or breaking off vegetation in the trails, as well as stepping on plants growing in the trail. Trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that grow into the trail may make hiking difficult, including problems with thorns, poison ivy, and exposure to ticks. Some degree of encounter with such hazards may be considered a part of the natural experience of walking in the Preserve.

Maintenance options: Established major trails, such as those shown on Open Street Map, generally show a trail tread 12-24 inches wide and an area cleared of vegetation 3-4 feet wide at waist to shoulder height. Maintenance of trail width should remain consistent with how they have developed with usage over time.

1. Occasional partial obstruction of trails by vegetation may be treated as a normal condition for trails.
2. For major trails, a “clearance area” could be specified for periodic removal of brush. For example, this could be specified as a roughly oval area about 3 feet wide and 6 1/2 feet high from a trail tread 18 inches wide. For minor trails, a narrower clearance area and trail tread could be specified, for example 2 foot wide and 12-inch trail tread.

3. Invasive species, such as multiflora rose, Japanese honeysuckle, wisteria, and stiltgrass, may be pro-actively removed in and alongside trails, to keep the trail open for use, control spread of invasive species, and to provide more opportunity for native plants to grow and to be enjoyed along trails.
4. Poison ivy may be removed if it is growing where those walking along the trail are likely to touch the plant. The presence of poison ivy alone does not necessarily trigger a need to clear vegetation.
5. Before or during activities to maintain the trail's width, native species that are rare or otherwise deserve special protection should be identified and marked, and those activities must avoid excessive impact to the rare plants.

Trash and Litter

Litter appears currently not to be a major problem along most trails, perhaps due to good habits by most trail users and volunteer collection of litter by individuals. Some tracts do have issues with litter. The Sunrise Tract has immense amounts of trash in the forest and on the forest edges, and the Greenbriar Tract often has litter along the trails. Additionally, there are some cases of manufactured materials, such as rugs and old metal, in or along trails. In some locations unauthorized campsites have been set up in the Preserve, leaving behind boards, roofing, mattresses, and other materials.

Maintenance options:

1. Trailhead signage can encourage "Leave no trace" practices of not littering and avoiding impacts on the Preserve.
2. Specific sites could be identified where organized clean-up efforts are needed, for example through volunteer workdays.

Rerouting Trails

Public Works may reroute short sections of trail to address problems enumerated above. Proposals for new trail segments longer than 100 feet will be submitted to Council through FPAB for review and approval.

Sources for Information on Trail Design and Maintenance

1. *Forest Preserve Stewardship Guidelines*. City of Greenbelt, Maryland, 2019. <https://www.greenbeltmd.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/16685/637194378187630000>. Hereafter referred to as SG.
2. *Natural Surface Trails by Design: Physical and Human Design Essentials of Sustainable, Enjoyable Trails*. By Troy Scott Parker. Natureshape. 2004. Also see <http://www.natureshape.com/index.html>
3. *Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives*. USDA Forest Service. September 2016. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/trail-management-tools/trail-fundamentals>
4. *Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook 2007 Edition*. Woody Hesselbarth, Brian Vachowski, and Mary Ann Davies. USDA Forest Service. <https://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/htmlpubs/htm07232806/toc.htm>
5. *Drainage Design & Drain Dips*. PCTA Trail Skills College Curriculum Instructor Planning Guide. Course 201. https://www.pcta.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/201_Drainage_Design__Drain_Dips_v0311.pdf?x20165

6. *Lightly on the Land: The SCA Trail Building and Maintenance Manual*. By Robert C. Birkby. The Student Conservation Association. Mountaineers Books. 2005.
7. *Appalachian Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance*. By William Birchard, Jr., and Robert Proudman. Appalachian Trail Conference. 2000.

DRAFT

NORTH WOODS TRACT

General Considerations

The Forest Preserve *Stewardship Guidelines* describe the trails in the North Woods Tract as primitive and stipulate that they receive minimum maintenance (SG, pp. 13-14 and ii).

Trail maintenance in the North Woods Tract shall be of low intensity to preserve the distinctive character of hiking there. The demanding and primitive nature of this trail network creates a different visitor experience than the easy strolls that may be available along the trails in Greenbelt Park, Schrom Hills or Buddy Attick Park. In the North Woods, a visitor must use wayfinding skills at trail junctions or along indistinct sections of trail because the *Stewardship Guidelines* (pg. 14) stipulates that trails remain unmarked. A degree of physical interaction with nature is required, such as brushing aside branches, stepping over logs, and watching for mud or an exposed root.

The goal for trail maintenance in the North Woods Tract is to preserve the primitive nature of the trails, while also identifying and responding to situations where trail maintenance is warranted to avoid or reverse ecological damage. General policies include the following:

1. Refrain from trail-maintenance activity or creating a new trail unless it is necessary to maintain ecosystem health (SG, pg. 14).
2. When the severity of a trail problem or the best solution is unclear at a particular location, monitor that location rather than act prematurely.
3. The Forest Preserve is to be maintained so that it appears to be a "wild place free from structures, refuse, or other man-made marks" (SG, pg. 3). This guidance means that a trail-maintenance solution should blend into the surroundings rather than call attention to itself as being a human-made alteration to the forest. In the North Woods Tract, trails shall have no blazes or other permanent markings (SG, pg. 14). Avoid permanent signage in the interior of the North Woods Tract (SG, pg. 15).
4. Trail maintenance shall alter biota, soil, water flow, or visitor experience to the minimum extent possible.
5. While bridges are generally unnecessary at stream crossings in the North Woods, there may be locations where a bridge would facilitate management goals and avoid ecosystem harm. A bridge may be necessary if visitors are frequently creating impromptu bridges. As per the *Greenbelt City Code*, bridges are permitted when necessary (12-156c, d).
6. Trail maintenance should avoid unnecessary pruning (12-156m) or otherwise harming plants (12-157a).
7. Living trees larger than 1" diameter at 4.5' off the ground shall not be cut to create a new trail segment. New trail segments should be designed to avoid cutting small trees and shrubs when possible.
8. Trail maintenance should use material found along the trail. Do not import material such as sand, gravel, boulders, fill dirt, wood chips, straw, or lumber into the Preserve. Woody material from whole logs is acceptable for muddy areas as described in the Mud section below. Some imported material could introduce pathogens or invasive species (prohibited by City Code 12-

156h). Some imported material would clash visually with the forest's rocks, soil, and ground cover (SG, pg. 3).

9. Trail maintenance in the North Woods is intended to be of a limited intensity that can be accomplished primarily with hand-held tools and without construction machinery or motorized vehicles. For example, avoid regrading of the soil unless a plan is approved by Council for a specific project (*City Code*, 12-156b, j). Under no circumstances should trail maintenance change the course of a body of water, except for minor adjustments for trail drainage, such as trail-tread maintenance using manual tools (*City Code* 12-156e).

The Environmental Coordinator shall apply these general policies to the specific trail conditions listed below. These policies only apply to major trails. Social trails should be addressed in accordance with Chapter 3.

Narrow or Indistinct Trail

The trails in the North Woods Tract are narrow, generally consisting of a 12-to-18-inch-wide tread with no shoulder. Narrow trails are desirable because they add to the primitive feel of the trail network, and they reduce the amount of undergrowth destroyed.

A "tread" is the vegetation-free ground that is walked upon. A "shoulder" is an area adjacent to the tread where any ground cover is regularly cut close to the ground. A shoulder may slope away from the tread and be covered with fallen leaves and branches.

Maintenance activities are not authorized, if the trail simply becomes seasonally indistinct in places, such as in autumn when trees lose their leaves. Soon after leaf-fall, the habitual use by visitors familiar with the trail will make it more visible once again.

Some trails have become indistinct because of the rapid growth of ground-covering invasive species, such as Japanese stiltgrass. Possible responses include allowing such trails to be abandoned or take action to keep them open. Consideration should be given to whether cutting back invasives sufficiently to reopen a trail would create a bare spot that would give even more aggressive invasives a chance to take hold.

In the North Woods Tract, permanent markings, such as blazes painted on tree, shall not be used to address the problem of an indistinct trail (SG, pg. 14). Temporary trail markings, such as brightly colored biodegradable flagging tape, may be attached to trees for a limited time to help reestablish a desirable section of trail that has grown faint.

Undergrowth

One characteristic that helps establish the primitive feel of the trails in the North Woods Tract is that undergrowth is not cleared near the trail. In many portions of the forest, trees, bushes, and other undergrowth grow immediately adjacent to the narrow trail tread. The trail tread should generally be no wider than 18 inches, and in ecologically sensitive areas, the trail tread should be limited to a 12-inch width. Occasional stray branches will grow across the trail.

Ticks live on the forest floor and on forest plants. In literature about the Forest Preserve, visitors shall be encouraged to take precautions against ticks, such as wearing proper clothing, wearing repellent, and checking for ticks after hiking.

A branch that grows across a trail may be cut if any of the following are true:

- The branch has grown too rigid to brush aside and is less than 6 1/2 feet from the ground,
- The plant is poison ivy,
- The plant is an invasive species,
- The branch has thorns, or
- There is a large mass of branches in one place that make the trail difficult to follow.

The ecological justification for such pruning is that, in its absence, visitors might excessively damage vegetation or make new trails to avoid these obstacles.

Mud

Intervention is unnecessary at locations along the trail where mud occurs occasionally after rain.

Intervention may be needed, if a location is persistently muddy, such as where the trail passes near a seep or crosses a minor stream. The ecological justification for intervention would be that, without remediation, a large and persistent mud patch along a trail would lead visitors to trample and damage undergrowth nearby, as they try to avoid the mud.

Monitor muddy locations for the following signs that the problem is becoming severe enough to justify action: shoeprints visible in mud, hikers placing logs across the mud patch, or the trail becoming significantly wider. The following solutions are permitted:

1. Use soil from the Forest Preserve to raise the trail bed a few inches above the surrounding ground level so that water runs off the trail rather than pooling on it. To restore drainage, it may be helpful to remove built-up leaves or dirt along the edge of the trail tread.
2. Reshape the trail bed for water to drain away from the trail, or make a shallow swale, an earthen "rolling grade dip" or, if necessary, a waterbar with wood or rocks.
3. Place a large log or logs across the mud patch for hikers to walk over with the log or logs oriented parallel to the trail. The log may be split or have its top surface roughened. If necessary, raise the log(s) a few inches above ground level to allow water to flow under them. Maintain a natural, rustic appearance. Avoid constructing bridges with sawn planks or manufactured fasteners.
4. Using dead wood, construct a "corduroy road" with short logs oriented perpendicular to the trail and spaced wide enough apart that water can continue flowing across the trail. To reduce its visual impact, keep such a road narrow, sufficient only for one-way traffic.
5. Use log disks (tree cookies) as stepping "stones" where one or two would be enough to cross a wet spot.
6. Relocate a short section of the trail away from the mud to a location where a new mud patch is unlikely to form. Avoid this solution in locations where the undergrowth has especially high ecological value or if it would be likely to end up creating two low-quality trails instead of one high-quality trail.

When considering options to solve a mud problem, do not take any actions that would lead to significant changes in the natural course of any body of water, an action the *City Code* 12-156e prohibits. Comply

with the Stewardship Guidelines to maintain the appearance of a "wild place... free of man-made marks" (SG, pg. 3) by avoiding actions that would be visible from a distance, standing out from the forest background.

Erosion

Monitor locations that are experiencing erosion for conditions that suggest that erosion is significant enough to require trail-maintenance. Check if erosion will turn this section of trail into an intermittent stream or expose roots above ground level making them a significant tripping hazard. These conditions may lead visitors to trample a wide swath of undergrowth to avoid that section of trail. A natural opportunity for creating a new section of trail occurs when a tree falls across the eroded section of trail, as discussed below in the section on fallen trees.

If erosion is significantly altering the trail, The Environmental Coordinator may

1. Reshape the trail bed using soil from nearby,
2. Make a shallow swale or an earthen "rolling grade dip" or,
3. Construct water bars with wood or rocks.

If it is not possible to redirect water away from the trail to avoid a severe erosion problem, Public Works may propose creating a new section of trail and closing the eroded section. However, making a new trail section may be counterproductive in easily eroded soils because the new route may soon erode just as deeply as the original route. New trail segments should conform with best practices for trail creation to prevent erosion. Proposals for new trail segments longer than 100' will be submitted through FPAB to Council for approval.

Drop-offs and Steep Slopes

Existing trails next to a steep drop-off should be rerouted away from the drop-off. A near vertical drop of 3 or more feet may count as steep, such as occurs along Canyon Creek and Goddard Branch in 2023. Rerouting the trail 4'-6' feet away from the top of the drop-off will significantly reduce the chance that an unobservant hiker would fall, while avoiding significant change to the view along the trail. Such a minor change would count as a "modest realignment" (as cited in Chapter 3, p. 12). In contrast, the public would be less likely to accept a major change in a trail's location, for example, one that lacked the pleasant view of a stream available along the original trail alignment. The Environmental Coordinator may reroute short sections of trail to avoid steep drop offs. Proposals for new trail segments longer than 100' will be submitted through FPAB to Council for approval.

Trail-maintenance action may also be advisable in some places in the North Woods Tract, where a short section of trail goes up a slope that is steep enough that hands must be used to avoid slipping. In a few places, a trail climbs the side of an erosion gully with or without a stream along its bottom. To assess whether trail-maintenance action is needed, examine the trail for widening, which would indicate people were trying multiple alternatives to avoid having difficulty with the steep section. Trail widening is evidence of ecological damage.

If action is needed, the least intense solution is to bypass the steep section by reopening an earlier trail alignment. A more intense solution would be to create a new trail segment that traverses the steep slope using a switchback. The least desirable solution is to build steps up the steep trail section because the Stewardship Guidelines require the appearance of a "wild place... free of man-made marks" (SG, p.

3). If steps must be built, use material from the Preserve, not lumber, rocks, fasteners, or other material brought in from outside the Preserve. Endeavor to maintain a natural, rustic appearance.

Stream Crossing

A bridge or other structure is not needed at most or all stream crossings in the North Woods Tract. Excluding Goddard Branch, the streams carry at most a few inches of water and are no more than a few feet wide. Leave a stream crossing unaltered, if the stream provides firm footing and is less than an inch deep.

In the North Woods, a trail that crosses a stream that flows along the bottom of a 3-to-6-foot-deep erosion gully may also be better left without bridge or other structure. Such structures would be needed, only if there were evidence that visitors have trouble climbing up and down the sides of the gully. Evidence that this were the case would be that the trail had widened considerably, as people try different spots to scramble up the bank. If a troublesome crossing is to remain in use, then the crossing should be made easier to walk and one route may be marked distinctly with natural material. For a brief time, brightly colored biodegradable flagging tape may be used to highlight the location of the enhanced stream crossing, if it might otherwise be missed by walkers. No permanent markings are to be placed in the North Woods.

If some sort of aid is needed at a stream crossing, seek a solution that avoids bringing in material from outside of the Forest Preserve. For example, a section of tree trunk may be cut from a tree that fell in the Preserve. The top of the log may be flattened to make it easier to walk across.

There are several reasons to dismantle a bridge, whether it was built by the City or unauthorized volunteers. The Environmental Coordinator or FPAB may propose the removal of a bridge, if it does not contribute to ecological goals, if a nearby trail crosses the same stream without needing a bridge, if the bridge is unsafe, or if the bridge is built with material from outside of the Preserve.

Fallen Trees

Trees across the trails are common on the primitive trail system in the North Woods. To maintain this aspect of the Preserve, intervention is unnecessary if a tree falls across a trail and the tree trunk can be stepped over, ducked under, or walked around. If the top of the trunk is only 18 inches above ground, it can be stepped over. If the bottom of the trunk is at least 5 feet above ground, it can be ducked under. If the tree's base is within 5 feet of the trail, then the tree can be walked around.

If the tree fell in such a way that the trunk or branches are more than 18" from the ground and less than 5' from the ground, The Environmental Coordinator may cut an opening that is sufficiently wide to make the trail passable, leaving the rest of the tree where it fell. This response is the best option if the original trail alignment is desirable, and the undergrowth is sensitive at this location. Alternatively, staff may leave the fallen tree alone and create or allow a new trail section that detours around it. This action is the best option if the original trail location or orientation was undesirable. In this case, excessive trampling of vegetation and compaction of soil could be reduced by promptly assessing a fallen tree and temporarily marking the trail to provide clear indication whether the goal is to reopen the original trail or cut a bypass. If the desirable option is to construct a new route around the fallen tree, this decision may be indicated with temporary markings or placing dead branches along the new alignment. When the desirable option is to reopen the original trail, this may be achieved in some cases by cutting off

some of the fallen tree's branches rather than completely removing the trunk and branches from across the trail.

In the case of trails along the fence between the Forest Preserve and BARC in 2023, fallen trees provide an opportunity to gradually create a more meandering natural-feeling trail. For this reason, preference should be given to rerouting the trail rather than restoring the alignment directly along the fence line. The parcel line between the Preserve and USDA's property is several feet south of that fence, so removing trees from the fence is not legally allowable.

Lastly, one can simply monitor the situation at a fallen tree. The best option may be to refrain from immediate trail-maintenance action, if the trail is still passable and there is no risk of major ecological harm from either a new trail forming or the original trail continuing to be used.

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HAMILTON WOODS TRACT

General Considerations

The Forest Preserve *Stewardship Guidelines* set several goals for trails in the Hamilton Tract (SG, pp. 14-15). Trail maintenance should support informal experiential and educational events and activities, such as the Pumpkin Walk, and allow temporary, non-destructive marking of trails for these events.

The trails should maintain the existing access from the James Wolf Athletic Fields, Northway Road and the GHI woodlands. Trails between Gardenway and McDonald field should be minimally maintained as they currently receive relatively little use.

The portion of this tract between Hamilton Place and Gardenway, known as Area D, is noted in the Guidelines as the most suitable of all Preserve tracts for planning and managing a hiking area accessible to those using chairs, walkers, or other mobility devices. Developing interpretive trails that are easy to use and barrier-free will make a portion of the Forest Preserve available to a larger segment of the public without threatening or compromising the character and quality of the Preserve as a whole.

Finally, the area just south of the James Wolf Athletic Fields is the site of a former landfill. The presence of landfill materials in areas near existing trails may present a hazard to the public. Minor trails should especially be discouraged in this area.

The Environmental Coordinator shall apply these general policies to the specific trail conditions listed below. These policies only apply to major trails. Social trails should be addressed in accordance with Chapter 3.

Undergrowth

Trails in Hamilton tract are intended to be easier to traverse than those of North Woods Tract, but the maintenance of these trails should still have as little impact on the vegetation and other natural features as possible.

Underbrush may be cleared to maintain 30 inches of clearance along the trails. Branches crossing the trails less than seven feet off the ground should be trimmed to achieve the 30-inch clearance standard. This is particularly important for plants that pose some hazard, such as thorns or poison ivy. Branches should be trimmed according to standard pruning good practices, not just cut off at the 30" width. This may result in some branches being cut wider than the 30" standard. Underbrush may not be disturbed beyond the 30 inch-width and 7-foot height standard laid out in this section.

Visitors are encouraged to take precautions against ticks such as wearing proper clothing, wearing repellent, and checking for ticks after hiking.

Mud

The standards for managing muddy areas in the Hamilton Woods are the same as those in the North Woods. Refer to Chapter 4, p. 19.

Erosion

There are fewer trails on steep slopes that are prone to erosion in the Hamilton Tract than there are in the North Woods Tract. Trails that could be vulnerable to erosion in 2023 are generally found running from Ridge Road into the Preserve between Northway and Hamilton Tract. These trails generally start on private property outside of the Hamilton Tract, so coordination with those landowners will be needed to address problems.

The trails should be monitored to see if conditions indicate that erosion is a problem. This can be indicated by exposed roots above ground level, or a tendency for certain stretches of the trail to act as intermittent streams after rain. A trail that widens on a steep slope should also be cause for concern.

The standards for managing erosion in the Hamilton Woods are the same as in the North Woods except for possible construction of log steps or a series of water bars that function like steps for deeply entrenched trail sections. Any steps and water bars must be built using materials from the Preserve. Refer Chapter to 4, p. 20.

Stream Crossing

In several places, trails in the Hamilton Track in 2023 cross deeply incised gullies that appear to be actively eroding. These locations currently have unauthorized wooden bridges and walkways. To stabilize these stream channels, steps should be taken to address the storm flows that cause erosion. The source of these issues is likely runoff from impervious surfaces outside of the Hamilton Tract, so any permanent solution will require the cooperation of neighboring landowners.

The existing bridges should be periodically inspected to ensure that they are in good condition and that the stream banks have not eroded to the point where the bridges are no longer viable. Should these bridges become unusable, then The Environmental Coordinator or FPAB may submit a proposal to replace the bridge or to remove the bridge and reroute the trail.

Fallen Trees

In the Hamilton Woods, trails should be easier to traverse than in the North Woods. No intervention is necessary if a tree falls across a trail and the tree trunk can be easily stepped over, ducked under, or walked around. If the top of the trunk is only 12 inches above ground, it can be stepped over. If the bottom of the trunk is at least 6 feet above ground, it can be ducked under. If the tree's base is within 5 feet of the trail, then the tree can be walked around.

If the tree fell in such a way that the trunk or branches are more than 12" from the ground and less than 6' from the ground, The Environmental Coordinator may cut an opening that is sufficiently wide to make the trail passable, leaving the rest of the tree where it fell. This response is the best option if the original trail alignment is desirable, and the undergrowth is sensitive at this location. Alternatively, staff may reroute the trail as described in Chapter 4 on p. 21 under the heading Fallen Trees.

Pumpkin Walk Trail

Every year around Halloween, several hundred visitors walk this trail south from Northway and then east to Wolfe Fields after dark to see the lit jack-o-lanterns on display. The large number of visitors and low lighting pose a risk for injuries to occur and for unnecessary damage to the trail and surrounding vegetation.

This trail should be maintained to be very easy to walk, even in the dark. Branches and other vegetation should be cleared so that the trail has a width of 30 inches. When a tree falls across the trail, a section should be cut through it, if it could conceivably be a tripping hazard in the dark. Some sections of the trail are often muddy and should be addressed as described in Chapter 4. These maintenance activities should occur at least once a year and prior to the Pumpkin Walk, which is typically held on the last Saturday of October.

Finally, as the Pumpkin Walk Trail already hosts many visitors, if any other large activity were to take place in the Preserve, it should be directed to this trail to minimize impacts to the other trails.

Barrier Free Trail

The trails in the Forest Preserve generally have obstacles and/or steep slopes that can make hiking difficult for some potential users. Over the years, there has been some consideration of creating a trail in the Preserve in a relatively flat area and keeping the trail free from obstacles such as fallen logs and branches. This trail would then be accessible to visitors who cannot negotiate trails in other parts of the Preserve.

The portion of this tract between Hamilton Place and Gardenway, known as Area D, is the most suitable area for such a trail. This area is relatively flat and currently receives relatively few visitors. Although there is a currently a faint trail through this area, it is not as well established as trails in other parts of the Preserve. Should a barrier free trail be installed, there is no need to follow the route of the current trail, rather it should be routed in such a way as to enhance accessibility. Any proposal to create such a trail shall be routed to City Council through FPAB for review and approval.

BOXWOOD, BELLE POINT, SUNRISE, AND GREENBRIAR TRACTS

Boxwood Tract

The Boxwood tract is located at the corner of Ridge and Crescent. The forest surrounds a playground, a small basketball court and two small grassy fields that are not part of the Preserve. The interior of the forest is largely trash free and appears to have very few visitors.

There are currently no trails in the tract other than a short and faint trail leading from the basketball court to the nearest field. There is currently no urgent need for a trail in this tract, but neither is there a reason to prohibit trails. If there is a future need or desire for trails in this tract, they should be considered by the city as a potentially beneficial addition. Any proposal to create such a trail shall be routed to City Council through FPAB for review and approval.

Belle Point Tract

The Belle Point tract is located on the southwest side of Buddy Attick Park. The most prominent and heavily used trail is the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) right-of-way that leads from the lake to the Charlestown North apartment complex. An electric right-of-way is found on the west side of the tract along the beltway off-ramp. Both rights-of-way are managed by their respective utility companies.

The only other trail in the tract leads from the spillway at Greenbelt Lake south-west towards the Beltway. This once-popular trail led to Indian Springs, but a section of the trail was eliminated by the construction of the Beltway. Although the trail no longer leads anywhere, it is still easily visible. The trail is wide with compacted soils and appears to have had gravel added in some places in the past.

Little maintenance is required for the existing trail. If the trail is blocked by fallen dead trees and visitors are creating new trails to circumvent them, then a path may be cleared through the trees using the standards detailed in the Fallen Trees section of Chapter 5 on p. 24.

There have not been any requests for additional trails in this tract. However, a loop could be created by connecting the upper end of the WSSC right-of-way to the end of the Indian Springs trail. This is not currently a priority but should be considered if there is public interest in expanding trails in this tract.

Sunrise Tract

The Sunrise tract is located between the Beltway, the Hanover Apartments, Greenbelt dog park, and the Greenway Center. A stream runs along its southeastern border. The tract is sloped, with the lowest elevations along the stream and the highest elevations adjacent to the beltway.

This tract currently has no trails. The tract has considerable amounts of litter, indicating that there is some level of public use. The City should consider developing a small loop trail in this tract. The loop would ideally have one entrance close to the dog park and potentially a second entrance close to the Hanover Apartments. The loop would run from the dog park south along the stream until the stream exits the tract. Then the trail would double back north to the dog park along a parallel route in the

interior of the forest, possibly along the hillside with the views that would create. The trail should not run too close to the Beltway as the traffic noise is quite loud and would be unpleasant. Any proposal to create such a trail shall be routed to City Council through FPAB for review and approval.

Greenbriar

The 7-acre Greenbriar tract is located at the intersection of Hanover Parkway and Mandan Road, next to Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Unlike the other small tracts in this section, the Greenbriar Tract has a well-developed trail system that will require monitoring and occasional management. (See Figure 3.)

The tract is roughly divided in half by a heavily incised stream which runs from south to north. The stream originates from one water conduit and drains into another. Close to the south side of the tract, a bridge and culvert allows visitors to cross the stream. This formal stream crossing may require ongoing maintenance. On either side of the bridge the trails form a loop.



Figure 3. Map of trails in the Greenbriar tract of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve. These trails are the official major trails of this tract.

With two exceptions, the trails in this tract are generally narrow but persistent, and in places there is only a narrow opening in the vegetation. While there are some signs of chainsaw use in the tract, this is much less common than in the North or Hamilton Woods. In 2023 these trails have been blocked by numerous downed trees. Some of these trees can be climbed over, but in other places the trails are completely blocked and require visitors to detour off-trail. Blocked trails should and may be cleared by sawing a path through the fallen trees using the standards detailed in the Fallen Trees section of Chapter 5 on p. 24. Any downed trees or branches that are taller than one foot should be removed from the trails. The removed wood should be scattered in nearby woods, but not be placed in a way that would channel water onto the trail.

There are two trails that receive heavier use. The first is a pair of parallel, short trails originating at the Greenbriar Park sign along Hanover Parkway and ending at the small clearing in the northeast corner of the tract. The second heavily used trail originates along Hanover Parkway to the west of the stream and leads south and then west to Eleanor Roosevelt High School. This trail is wider than other trails in the tract and appears to be used by students walking to school. This trail should be managed so that downed trees do not obstruct the trail, which will prevent users from creating new detour trails. Trees and branches on this trail should be cleared from ground level up to 6' from the ground. The Environmental Coordinator may cut an opening that is sufficiently wide to make the trail passable, leaving the rest of the tree where it fell. There is often trash present along this trail, mainly at the end closest to the high school, so occasional clean-up days should be organized.

There is only one trail with additional ecological concerns that could warrant additional maintenance. The trail heading west from the north entrance dips into a persistent low muddy area. To prevent visitors from widening the trail while attempting to avoid the mud, The Environmental Coordinator may use the methods listed in Chapter 4 on p. 19.

TRAIL ISSUE REPORTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Trail Issue Reporting

An online form (Appendix A) will be maintained by City Staff for the public to report trail issues in the Forest Preserve. When a member of the public emails, calls, or communicates such concerns in person, City Staff should direct them to submit this information using the on-line form. Failing that, City Staff may enter their concerns for them using this form. Problems that City Staff discover on their own should also be recorded using this form. In this way, the form will become a record-keeping method for trail issues in the Preserve. The form will allow for record of location, severity, area, type, photos/videos, and additional comments. City Staff will promptly pass on to FPAB reports filed with the online form regardless of whether FPAB needs to make recommendations or take action. The Environmental Coordinator can work with volunteers or city employees to take action.

FPAB will review these reports and the actions taken by The Environmental Coordinator. If needed, FPAB will provide comments or make recommendations to City Council regarding the implementation of the Master Trail Plan to achieve the stewardship goals.

Volunteer Help in Cooperation with City Staff

The City of Greenbelt Public Works Environmental Coordinator in coordination with the Forest Preserve Advisory Board has in the past received help from volunteers for annual clean-up events. Volunteers have usually been area residents and students who need to meet their volunteer service hours for Prince George's County Public Schools. Volunteers can also help execute planned trail maintenance in accordance with this Plan. Coordination between the Forest Preserve Advisory Board and the Environmental Coordinator will be required to plan and facilitate these efforts. These activities must also be supervised by the Environmental Coordinator, or someone authorized by them, to ensure that volunteer efforts are successful. Instruction will be needed to perform maintenance safely and in accordance with the methods proposed in this document. An informal stewardship team of local ecology experts might also help with such efforts.

APPENDIX A

Below is an example of the online form that should be used to report trail issues in the Forest Preserve. This example was created by an interested resident and may not represent the final version of the reporting form on the city's website.

GFP Trail Issue Reporting Form

Use this form to report trail issues in the Greenbelt Forest Preserve. Provide as much information as you can. A volunteer will contact you for clarifications if needed. Thank you.

First and Last Name *

Your answer

Email address

Your answer

Phone number (required if no email was provided)

Your answer

Type of issue *

- ☐ Tree fall
- ☐ Stream or Wet Area Crossing
- ☐ Trail damage
- ☐ Major Poison Ivy obstacle
- ☐ Large trash pile

☐ Other: _____

Preserve Track Name *

☐ North Woods Track (i.e. Anywhere North of Northway Rd.)

☐ Other tracks

☐ I do not know

Location description *

Your answer _____

Severity

☐ Low

☐ Medium

☐ High

☐ Do not know

Description of the trail issue *

Your answer _____

Do have photos or videos? If you do please let us know below and we will contact you by email. You can also email the photos directly to example@greenbeltmd.gov or include URLs of the photo(s) below if you use something like Dropbox or Google Drive to save your photos

Your answer

Do have photos or videos? If you do please let us know below and we will contact you by email. You can also email the photos directly to example@greenbeltmd.gov , or include URLs of the photo(s) below if you use something like Dropbox or Google Drive to save your photos.

Your answer

(optional) Any suggestions about what could be done to improve the issue you are reporting?

Your answer

Is the issue near a sensitive area? (e.g. with rare plants or a particularly valuable habitat)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I do not think so
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know

Any additional comments?

Your answer

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Terri Hruby

Submitting Department: Planning

Item Type: OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Section: OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

Subject:

Metro's Better Bus Network Redesign

Suggested Action:

Reference:

Memorandum, J. Fearer, 06/15/23

Draft Letter, 06/20/23

WMATA Better Bus Draft Visionary Network Maps

The proposed Better Bus Visionary Network provides service seven (7) days a week, with the exception of the commuter-serving MD440, and the lowest proposed frequency is 30 minutes for any route, including during off-peak times. While this is a positive for Greenbelt, staff notes some critical reductions in connections and service to key locations throughout and adjacent to the City.

Staff recommends the City Council transmit comments to WMATA on the proposed Better Bus Visionary Network including the concerns and considerations outlined in staff's memo.

Attachments:

[23-0620_Better Bus Draft Visionary Network_Staff Memo with Updates_jfearer_FINAL.pdf](#)

[23-0620_Better Bus Draft Visionary Network_Council Letter_v.2_jfearer_DRAFT.pdf](#)

[WMATA Better Bus Draft Visionary Network Maps_Updated.pdf](#)

CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

15 CRESCENT ROAD, SUITE 200, GREENBELT, MD 20770



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Jaime Fearer, Assistant Director of Planning

VIA: Tim George, Interim City Manager

DATE: June 15, 2023

RE: Project Update on Metro's Better Bus Network Redesign - UPDATES

Background

In 2018–2020, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA/Metro) worked on its Bus Transformation Project (BTP), which culminated in a Strategy and Action Plan with 26 recommendations to transform Metrobus into a fast, frequent, reliable, affordable, and unified system. Building on BTP, and included as a key recommendation of the project, Better Bus is WMATA's new initiative focusing on network redesign, facilities modernization, bus electrification/zero-emissions, improved bus communications and customer information, more bus priority lanes and signals, and bus stop and shelter improvements.¹ Starting in summer of 2022, WMATA began Phase 1 of a three-phase Network Redesign.

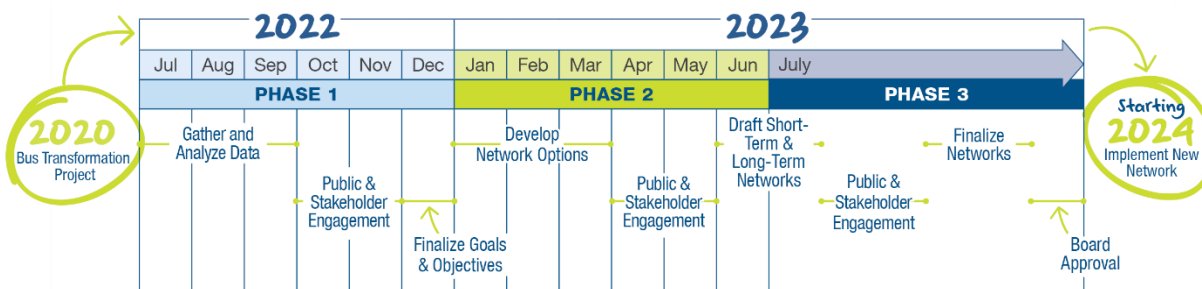
Currently, buses in the region provide more than 500,000 trips each day, and the Better Bus Network Redesign is the first comprehensive effort to redesign the region's Metrobus network since it was established in 1973. Throughout the effort, Metro is also supporting partner agencies in Prince George's County (TheBus) and the City of Fairfax (CUE) as they embark on network redesigns as well.

WMATA envisions this as an opportunity to:

- Keep up with a changing region and the people who live and work here;
- Better connect people to where they need to go—about half of our region lacks access to frequent transit service;
- Promote equity, inclusiveness, and access to opportunity; and
- Create a network that is easy to use no matter where you are.

¹ <https://wmata.com/initiatives/plans/Better-Bus/index.cfm>

The project comprises three (3) phases, and is currently in the latter stages of Phase 2.



Phase 1 ran from July 2022 through December 2022 and focused on gathering and analyzing data, and setting goals and priorities. The current phase, Phase 2, began in January 2023 and is scheduled to wrap up at the end of June 2023; this phase included the development of the Draft Visionary Network. Phase 3 will kick off in July 2023 and is projected to run through the fall; the focus will be on synthesizing feedback and developing two networks for further review: one that is a short-term network that can be deployed right away, and the other that is a Visionary Network for future implementation. Currently, WMATA project staff plan to present a recommended short-term network to Metro's Board of Directors in 2024, which would be incorporated into the Fiscal Year 2025 budget outreach process. Pending approval, the new short-term network could begin to roll out in Fiscal Year 2025.

The window for feedback on the proposed Draft Visionary Network has been extended to June 18, and WMATA will include Greenbelt City Council's feedback after deadline if necessary. Additionally, WMATA anticipates two additional opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement and feedback early in Phase 3.

Key Changes of the Draft Visionary Network in Greenbelt

- All service is seven (7) days a week, with the exception of the MD440, which is the equivalent of the existing TheBus 15X and provides commuter-oriented service to NASA Goddard from the Greenbelt and New Carrollton Metro Stations.
- The lowest frequency proposed is 30 minutes for any given route, including during off-peak times.
- Frequent, direct service to DC and the University of Maryland—College Park (UMD) campus (along Route 1) from Greenbelt Metro Station.
- This proposal does not include direct service *through* the UMD campus from the Greenbelt Metro Station; that direct service is currently provided by Metrobus C2.
- UMD's Shuttle UM services are not affected by this plan.
- This proposal does not provide service directly to the Greenbelt Station South Core development.
- While service to Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) is not a proposed recommendation in this draft, the project team will evaluate this connection (formerly Metrobus B30) in the next phase of the Better Bus Network Redesign.

- Service to Doctors Community Hospital from Greenbelt Metro Station and Historic Greenbelt limited to the proposed MD350, and from east Greenbelt Road via the proposed MD348.
- The proposal includes a loss of service along Edmonston Road.
- One route is proposed (MD349), rather than the current two (G12, G14), on Lakecrest Drive, Lakeside Drive, and Westway. University Square Apartments, Lakecrest Drive, Lakeside Drive, and Westway will no longer have a one-seat ride to New Carrollton Station, and instead will have a two-seat ride via transfer at Roosevelt Center.

Summary of Proposed Service Recommendations (changes from existing service)

These proposed service recommendations include changes from existing service for both Metrobus and TheBus. Note that the route numbers in the Draft Visionary Network are temporary placeholders for the study. An effort is underway to evaluate a potential new routing configuration for a regional bus network.

MD350 Greenbelt-New Carrollton – Compare to existing Metrobus G12; TheBus 11, 16

- Proposed service:
 - 30-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Weekdays and weekends 6:00 am – 11:00 pm
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus G12:
 - 30-75-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:15 am – 9:15/11:30 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - TheBus 11: 30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 6:30am – 6:30 pm
 - TheBus 16: 30-minute service, Monday – Saturday, 6:30am – 6:30 pm
- This route is similar to the existing G12, but with TheBus 11 routing through Historic Greenbelt (so no service on Lakecrest Drive, Lakeside Drive, or Westway)
- Provides service to Historic Greenbelt, Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS), Ora Glen Drive, Doctors Community Hospital, New Carrollton Metro Station

MD351 Greenbelt-New Carrollton – Compare to existing Metrobus G12, G14; TheBus 11, 16

- Proposed service:
 - 30-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Weekdays 5:00 am – 11:00 pm, weekends 6:00 am – 11:00 pm
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus G12:
 - 30-75-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:15 am – 9:15/11:30 pm

- 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - Metrobus G14:
 - 30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 10:15 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - TheBus 11: 30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 6:30am – 6:30 pm
 - TheBus 16: 30-minute service, Monday – Saturday, 6:30am – 6:30 pm
- Provides existing G12 routing between Greenbelt Metro Station and ERHS, then takes Cipriano Road/Annapolis Road to New Carrollton Station instead of Hanover Parkway
- Does not serve Doctors Community Hospital like the existing G12

MD349 Greenbelt-Bowie State – Existing Metrobus G14, G12, B27

- Proposed service:
 - 30-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Weekdays 6:00 am – 10:30 pm, weekends 6:00 am – 10:00 pm
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus G12:
 - 30-75-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:15 am – 9:15/11:30 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - Metrobus G14:
 - 30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 10:15 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - Metrobus B27: 30-60-minute rush hour service, Monday – Friday, 6:00 am – 9:30 pm
- Provides existing G14 routing from Greenbelt Metro Station through Beltway Plaza and Historic Greenbelt; takes Ora Glen Drive instead of Greenbelt Road between Hanover Parkway and Mandan Road; provides a new connection to Bowie State University
- The only proposed route along Westway/Lakecrest Drive/Lakeside Drive/University Square Apartments
- Removes a direct connection between Franklin Park/Beltway Plaza/University Square Apartments and New Carrollton Station (see rush hour, weekday-only service on the proposed MD440)
- Takes existing Metrobus 16 routing through Franklin Park (on Springhill Lane instead of Edmonston Road). In this proposal, all bus service stays on Springhill Lane (the existing Metrobus 16 routing) to provide higher frequency service on one routing through the neighborhood, rather than lower frequency service on two routings.

MD253 Greenbelt-Deanwood – Compare to existing Metrobus R12, T14; TheBus 16

- Proposed service:
 - 20-minute service, seven (7) days a week

- Gains Sunday service from existing R12, along with better frequency
 - Weekdays and weekends 5:00 am – 1:00 am
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus R12:
 - 30-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 9:30 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday, 5:00 am – 10:00 pm
 - Metrobus T14 (does not serve Greenbelt):
 - 20-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 4:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday, 6:40 am – 9:45 pm
 - 60-100-minute service, Sunday, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
 - TheBus 16: 30-minute service, Monday – Saturday, 6:30 am – 6:30 pm
- Serves Beltway Plaza like the existing Metrobus R12
- Serves Franklin Park on Springhill Lane, not Edmonston Road. In this proposal, all bus service stays on Springhill Lane (the existing Metrobus 16 routing) to provide higher frequency service on one routing through the neighborhood, rather than lower frequency service on two routings.

MD249 Rhode Island Ave/Brentwood-Greenbelt – Compare to existing Metrobus 83, 86, C2, T14, T18; TheBus 14, 17; former Metrobus 81

- Proposed service:
 - 15-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Weekdays 5:30 am – 12:30 am, weekends 6:00 am – 12:30 am
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus 83/86:
 - 10-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:30 am – 11:30 pm
 - 30-60-minute service, Saturday, 5:30 am – 11:30 pm
 - 30-60-minute service, Sunday, 6:30 am – 8:30 pm
 - Metrobus C2:
 - 15-30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 9:30 pm
 - 20-30-minute service, Saturday, 6:45 am – 10:15 pm
 - 35-50-minute service, Sunday, 9:00 am – 7:30 pm
 - Metrobus T14 (does not serve Greenbelt):
 - 20-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 4:30 am – 10:00 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday, 6:40 am – 9:45 pm
 - 60-100-minute service, Sunday, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
 - Metrobus T18 (does not serve Greenbelt):
 - ~15-minute-service (excluding late-night/after midnight service), Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 1:30 am
 - 12-minute service (excluding late-night/after midnight service), Saturday, 6:30 am – 2:00 am

- 12-minute service (excluding late-night/after midnight service), Sunday, 7:00 am – 2:00 am
 - TheBus 14 (does not serve Greenbelt): 60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 6:00 am – 6:00 pm
 - TheBus 17: 30-45-minute service, Monday – Saturday, 6:00 am – 6:30 pm
- New, direct service between the Greenbelt and Rhode Island Avenue Metro Stations
- Service to, but not through, the UMD campus via Baltimore Avenue/Route 1

MD246 West Hyattsville-Greenbelt – Compare to existing Metrobus C2; TheBus 18; former Metrobus R3

- Proposed service:
 - 20-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Weekdays 6:00 am – 1:00 am; weekends 6:00 am – 12:30 am
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus C2:
 - 15-30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 9:30 pm
 - 20-30-minute service, Saturday, 6:45 am – 10:15 pm
 - 35-50-minute service, Sunday, 9:00 am – 7:30 pm
 - TheBus 18: 30-minute service, Monday – Saturday, 6:00 am – 6:00 pm
- Provides a connection between Greenbelt Metro Station and Takoma Langley Crossroads Transit Center, like the Metrobus C2
- No service to or through the UMD campus
- Provides a new connection to the West Hyattsville Metro Station

MD440 Greenbelt-New Carrollton – Compare to existing TheBus 15X

- Proposed service:
 - 20-minute service, weekday rush-hour only
 - Doubles the existing 40-minute service
 - Weekdays 6:00 am – 9:00 am, 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm
- Existing service:
 - TheBus 15X: 40-minute, rush-hour service
- Same routing as the existing 15X

MD348 Cherry Hill-Glenn Dale – Compare to existing Metrobus 83, F6, G12, G14; TheBus 14, 17

- Proposed service:
 - 30-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Weekdays 6:00 am – 11:00 pm; weekends 8:00 am – 10:00 pm
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus 83:

- 10-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:30 am – 11:30 pm
 - 30-60-minute service, Saturday, 5:30 am – 11:30 pm
 - 30-60-minutes service, Sunday, 6:30 am – 8:30 pm
- Metrobus F6 (does not serve Greenbelt): 30-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 9:30 pm
- Metrobus G12:
 - 30-75-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:15 am – 9:15/11:30 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
- Metrobus G14:
 - 30-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:00 am – 10:15 pm
 - 60-minute service, Saturday – Sunday, 6:30 am – 10:00 pm
- TheBus 14 (does not serve Greenbelt): 60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 6:00 am – 6:00 pm
- TheBus 17: 30-45-minute service, Monday – Saturday, 6:00 am – 6:30 pm
- No service within the City of Greenbelt; provides existing Metrobus G14 routing along Mission Drive and portions of Greenbelt Road and Good Luck Road
- Serves Doctors Community Hospital (along with MD350, above)

MD251 Laurel-Greenbelt – Compare to existing Metrobus 89M

- Proposed service:
 - 15-minute service, seven (7) days a week
 - Currently weekday-only service at ~45-minute headways
 - 30-minute service late-night
 - Weekdays 5:30 am – 12:30 am; weekends 6:00 am – 1:00 am
- Existing service:
 - Metrobus 89M: 40-60-minute service, Monday – Friday, 5:20 am – 11:00 pm
- Modified routing through downtown Laurel compared to existing Metrobus 89M

Conclusion & Next Steps

The proposed Better Bus Visionary Network provides service seven (7) days a week, with the exception of the commuter-serving MD440, and the lowest proposed frequency is 30 minutes for any route, including during off-peak times. While this is a positive for Greenbelt, staff notes some critical reductions in connections and service to key locations throughout and adjacent to the City.

The service hours on some of the proposed routes is shorter than on the current routes, and daily service would start later than the current early service on the MD350, MD349, MD249, MD246, and MD248. On each of these routes staff suggests a 5:00 am start versus the proposed 5:30 am – 6:00 am start.

While the proposal includes frequent, direct service to DC and the UMD campus along Baltimore Avenue/Route 1 from Greenbelt Metro Station, it does not include the direct service *through* campus

currently provided by Metrobus C2 in order to provide higher frequency service. Additionally, this proposal does not provide service directly to the Greenbelt Station South Core development, and staff suggests that that service be added.

The Visionary Network proposes all bus service for Franklin Park stays on Springhill Lane (the existing Metrobus 16 routing) to provide higher frequency service on one routing through the neighborhood, rather than lower frequency service on two routings. Additionally, the proposal includes a loss of service on Edmonston Road.

The draft calls for one proposed route (MD349), rather than the current two routes (Metrobus G12, G14), on Lakecrest Drive, Lakeside Drive, and Westway. One impact of this change would be that University Square Apartments, Lakecrest Drive, Lakeside Drive, and Westway will no longer have a one-seat ride to New Carrollton Station, and will instead have a two-seat ride via transfer at Roosevelt Center from the MD349 to the MD350 or MD 351.

Service to Doctors Community Hospital from Greenbelt Metro Station and Historic Greenbelt is limited to the proposed MD350, and from east Greenbelt Road via the proposed MD348. Franklin Park and Beltway Plaza would have a two-seat ride to Doctors Community Hospital via transfer from the MD349 to the MD350. Staff suggests revisions to the network to make service to the Hanover Parkway corridor and Doctors Community Hospital from Greenbelt West a one-seat ride.

Staff would like to see considerations for connecting Greenbelt to the proposed 24-hour network (current closest connections are at the College Park and New Carrollton Metro Stations), as well as for connecting Greenbelt to future Purple Line stations.

Finally, service to Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) is not a proposed recommendation in this draft, and the project team plans to evaluate this connection (formerly Metrobus B30) in the next phase of the Better Bus Network Redesign.

Staff recommends the City Council provide comments on the proposed Better Bus Visionary Network including the concerns and considerations outlined above.

June 20, 2023

Allison Davis, Acting Senior Vice President
Planning and Sustainability

Peter Cafiero, Managing Director
Intermodal Planning
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

RE: Metro's Better Bus Draft Visionary Network

Dear Ms. Davis and Mr. Cafiero:

The Greenbelt City Council would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Better Bus Draft Visionary Network and its potential impacts to the City of Greenbelt. The City Council held a work session with WMATA and City staff on June 7, 2023 to review the proposed draft changes to bus service serving the City. As you are aware, the City has worked through restructuring of its bus service a number of times, and we understand the challenges and complexity of such an undertaking, including the tradeoffs between bus frequency and coverage.

The City is supportive of the purpose, vision, and goals of Better Bus initiative, and looks forward to participating in future phases of the project in the coming months and years. The City has been, and remains, a strong advocate for improved frequency and spans of service for both Metrobus and TheBus, and we echo Metro's vision of better connecting people to where they need to go, and of promoting equity, inclusiveness, and access to opportunity. While the proposed Better Bus Draft Visionary Network provides service seven (7) days a week—with the exception of the commuter-serving MD440—and frequency every 30 minutes or better, including during off-peak times, the City notes some critical reductions in connectivity and service to key locations throughout and adjacent to Greenbelt.

The service hours on some of the proposed routes is shorter than on the current routes, and daily service would start later than the current early service on the MD350, MD349, MD249, MD246, and MD248. On each of these routes the City suggests a 5:00 am start versus the proposed 5:30 am – 6:00 am start in order to maintain the span of service, particularly at the start of the day, that the community needs and has come to expect.

Service to Doctors Community Hospital from Greenbelt Metro Station and Historic Greenbelt is limited to the proposed MD350, and from east Greenbelt Road via the proposed MD348. Franklin Park and Beltway Plaza would have a two-seat ride to Doctors Community Hospital via transfer from the MD349 to the MD350. The City suggests revisions to the network to make service to the Hanover Parkway corridor and Doctors Community Hospital from Greenbelt West a one-seat ride.

Additionally, this proposal does not provide service directly to the Greenbelt Station South Core development, and the City requests, at a minimum, that Metro explore opportunities to provide service along the MD 193/Greenbelt Road corridor in the vicinity of this dense development.

The City would also like to see considerations for connecting Greenbelt to the proposed 24-hour network (the current closest connections are at the College Park and New Carrollton Metro Stations), as well as for connecting Greenbelt to future Purple Line stations.

Finally, service to Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) is not a proposed recommendation in this draft, and we understand the project team plans to evaluate this connection (formerly Metrobus B30) in the next phase of the Better Bus Network Redesign—the City supports that this service be evaluated for reinstatement.

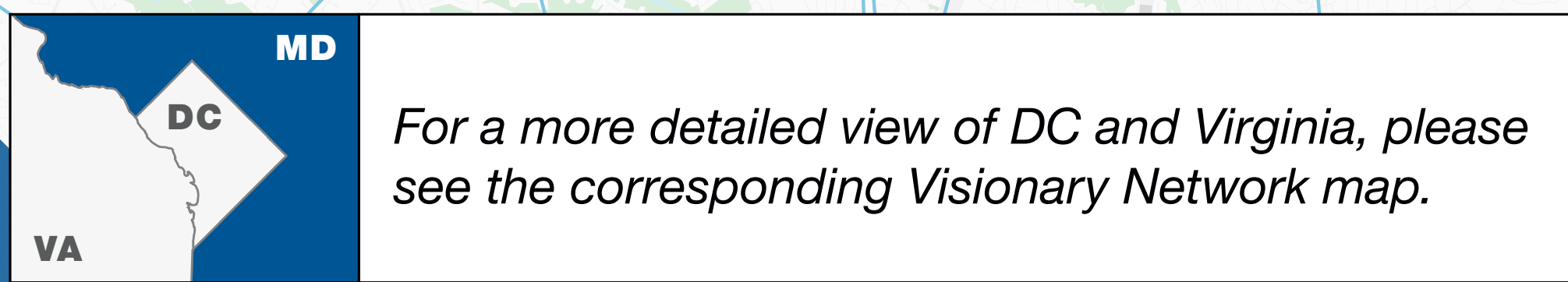
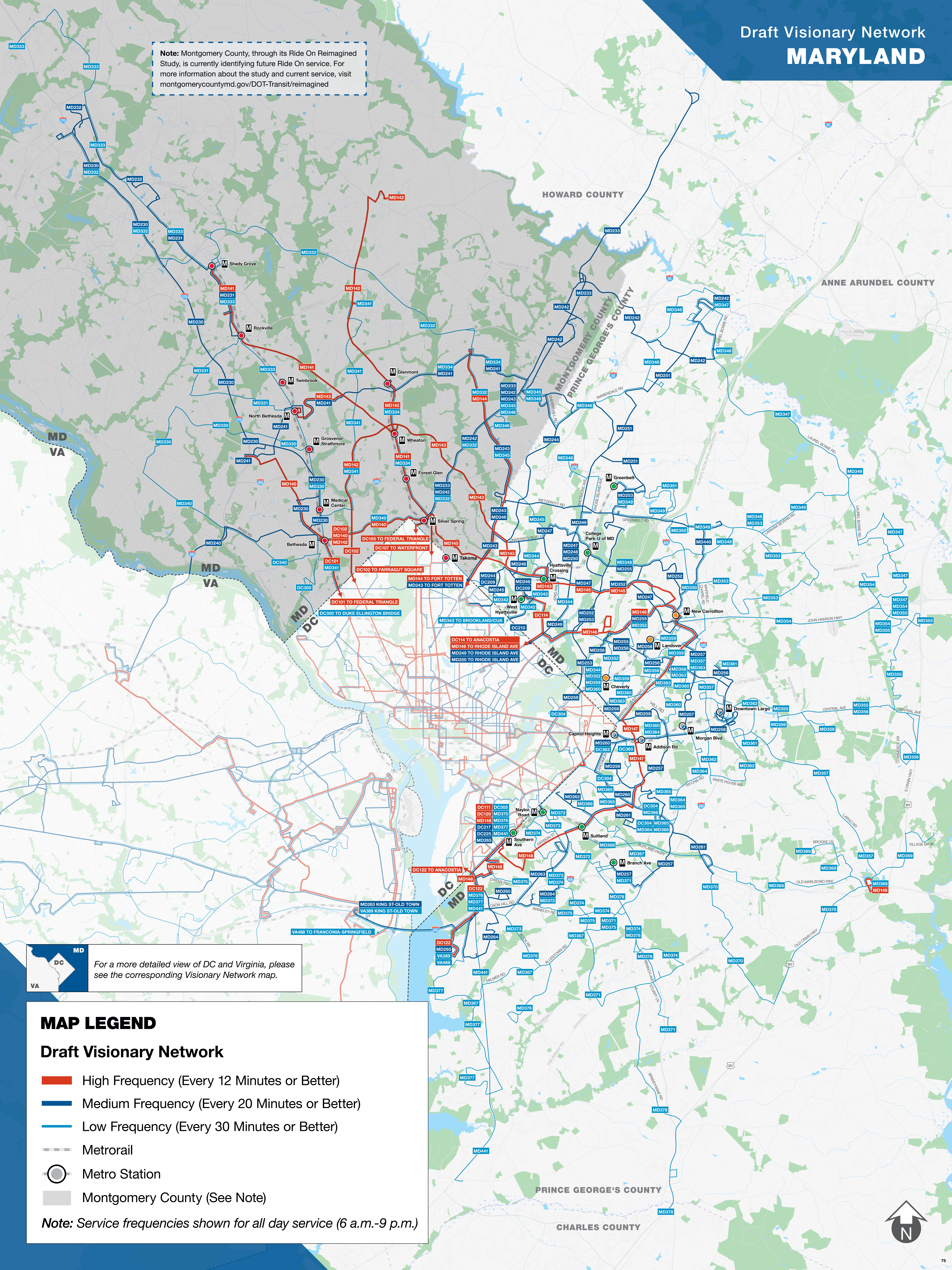
Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Jaime Fearer, Assistant Planning Director, at 240-542-2040 or jfearer@greenbeltmd.gov.

Sincerely,

Emmett V. Jordan, Mayor
City of Greenbelt

cc: City Council
Paul C. Smedberg, WMATA Board
Randy Clarke, WMATA
William Jones, WMATA
Ginger Archibald, WMATA
Michael D. Johnson, P.E., Prince George's County DPW&T
Timothy George, Acting City Manager
Terri Hruby, Director of Planning and Community Development
Jaime Fearer, Assistant Planning Director

Note: Montgomery County, through its Ride On Reimagined Study, is currently identifying future Ride On service. For more information about the study and current service, visit montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Transit/reimagined



MAP LEGEND

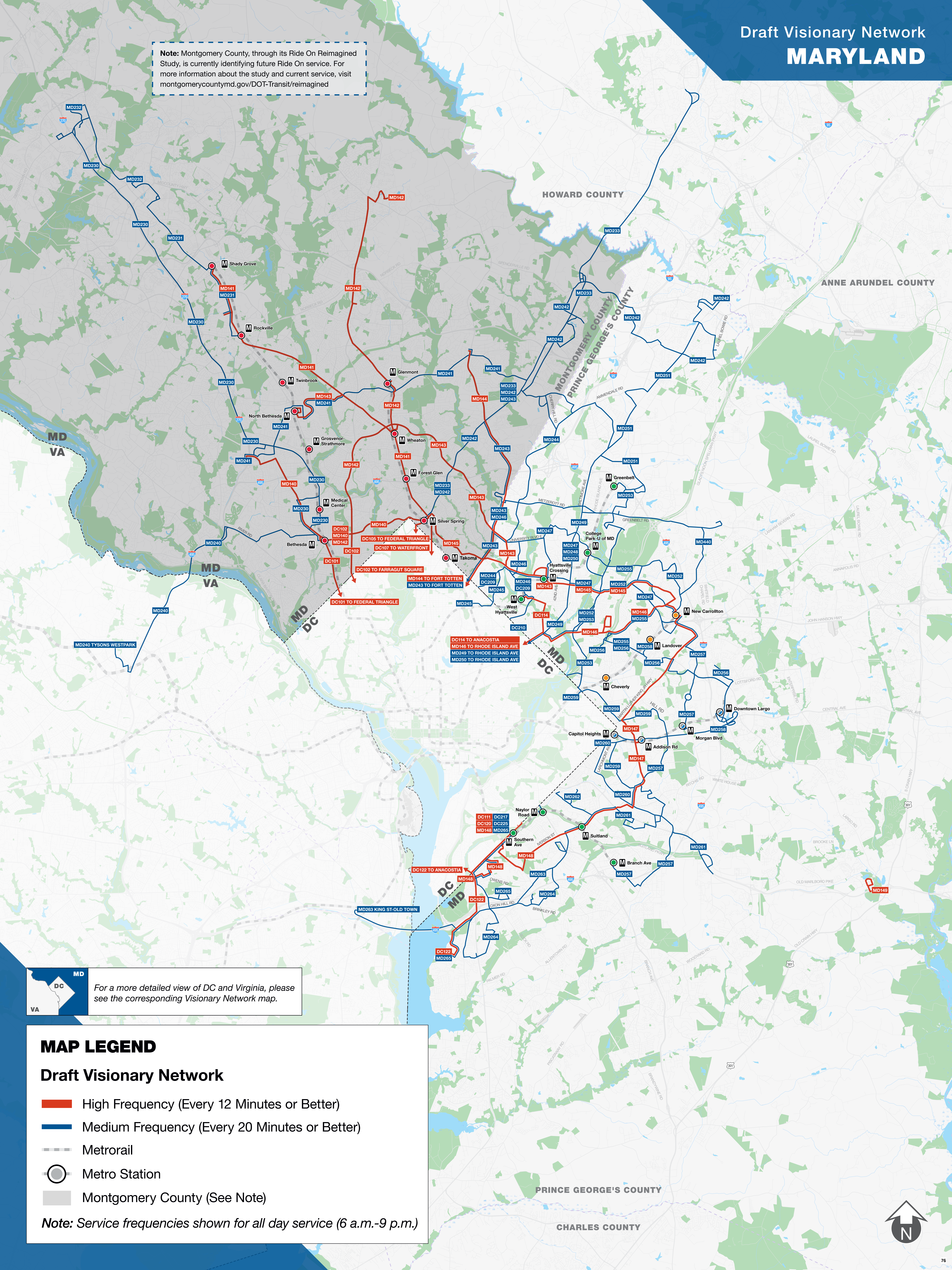
Draft Visionary Network

-  High Frequency (Every 12 Minutes or Better)
-  Medium Frequency (Every 20 Minutes or Better)
-  Low Frequency (Every 30 Minutes or Better)
-  Metrorail
-  Metro Station
-  Montgomery County (See Note)

Note: Service frequencies shown for all day service (6 a.m.-9 p.m.)



Note: Montgomery County, through its Ride On Reimagined Study, is currently identifying future Ride On service. For more information about the study and current service, visit montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Transit/reimagined



MD
DC
VA

For a more detailed view of DC and Virginia, please see the corresponding Visionary Network map.

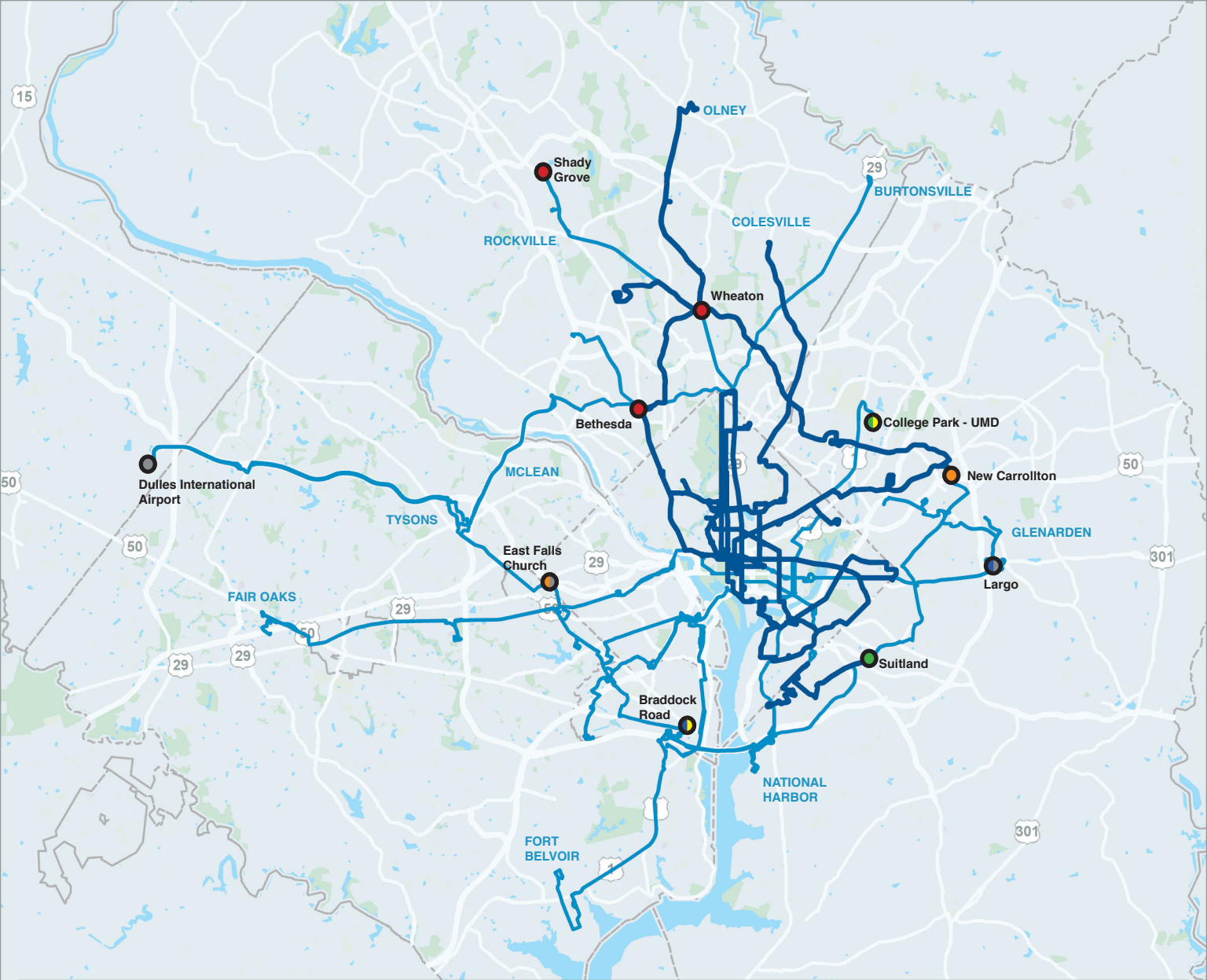
MAP LEGEND

Draft Visionary Network

- High Frequency (Every 12 Minutes or Better)
- Medium Frequency (Every 20 Minutes or Better)
- Metrorail
- Metro Station
- Montgomery County (See Note)

Note: Service frequencies shown for all day service (6 a.m.-9 p.m.)





Regional 24-Hour Service

To create a 24-hour transit network that connects the region, outside of Metrorail hours, bus services on proposed routes DC122, MD143, MD258, VA180, and VA182 were extended to key destinations (i.e., Dulles, L'Enfant Plaza, Union Station, and New Carrollton) to maintain connectivity overnight.

Overnight Frequency

- Medium Frequency (Every 20 Minutes or Better)
- Low Frequency (Every 30 Minutes or Better)

0 5 10 Miles

West Hyattsville - Greenbelt

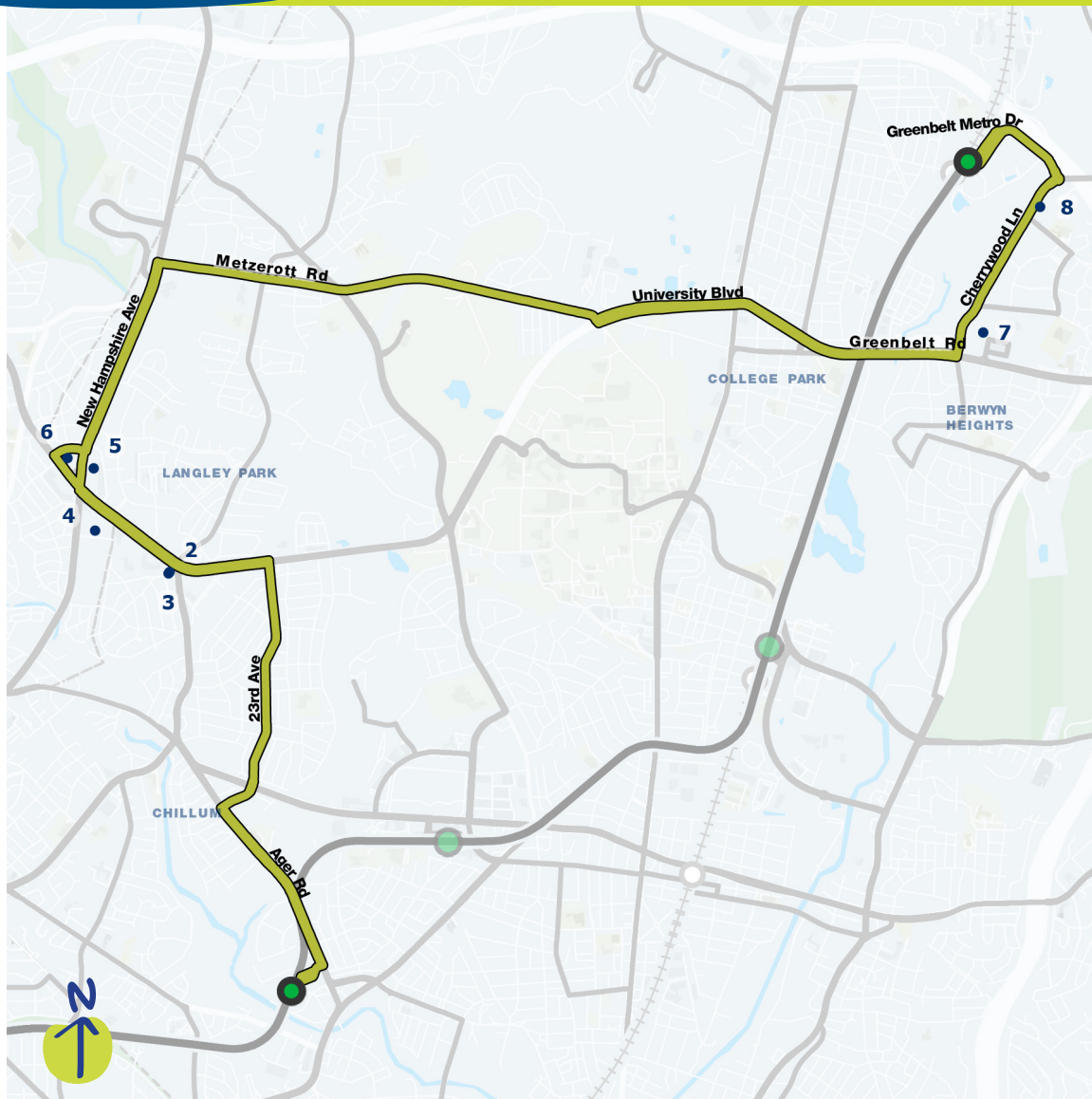
Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus C2

TheBus 18

Where will this route go?



- 1 West Hyattsville Metro Station
- 2 University Plaza
- 3 Hyattsville Medical Center
- 4 ALDI
- 5 Langley Park Plaza
- 6 Takoma Langley Crossroads Transit Center
- 7 Giant
- 8 Springhill Lake Recreation Center
- 9 Greenbelt Metro Station

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 6:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Weekends 6:00 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

20
minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

20
minutes

Weekends

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

20
minutes

Rhode Island Ave/Brentwood - Greenbelt

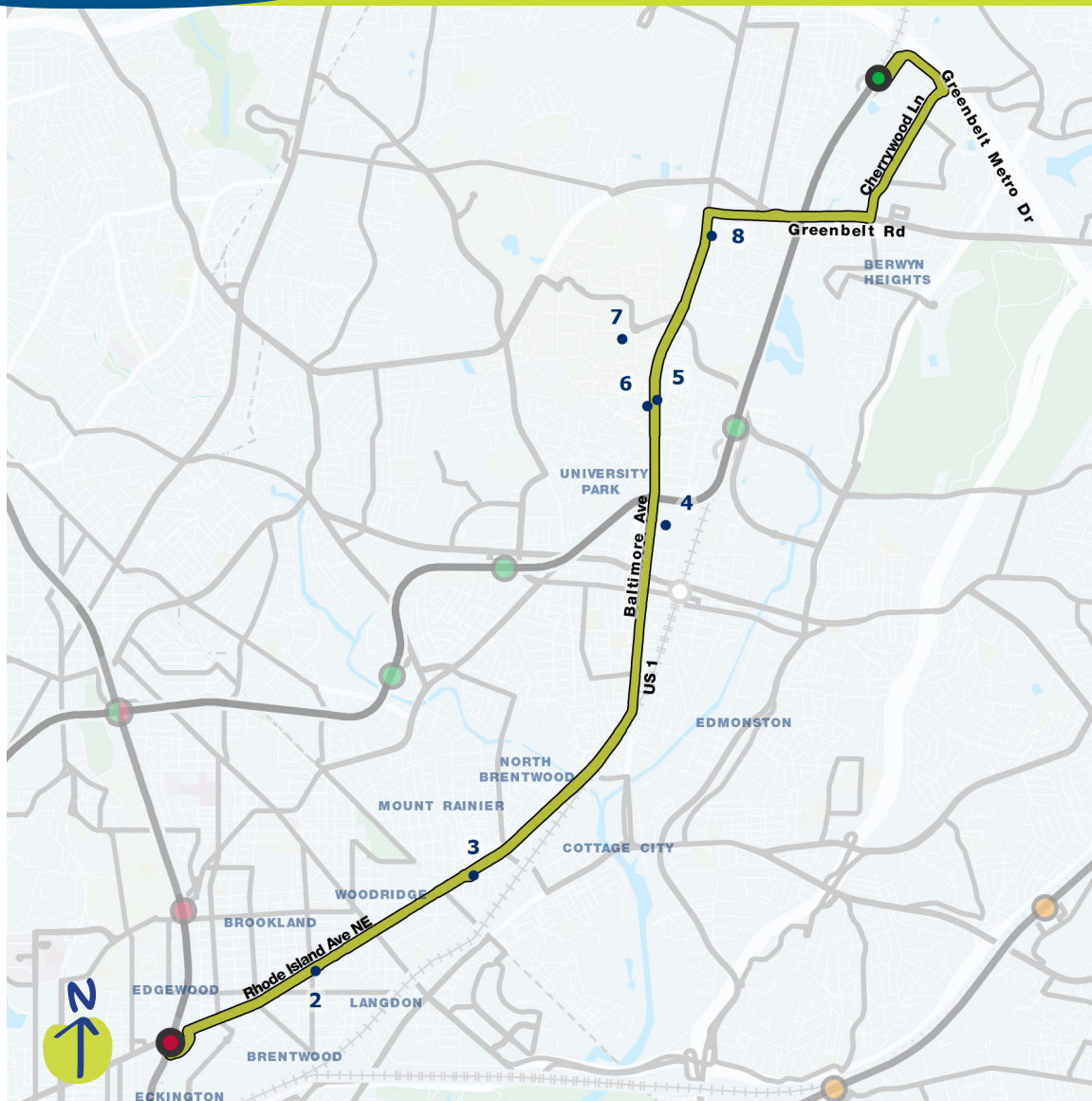
Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus 83, 86, C2, T14, T18

TheBus 14, 17

Where will this route go? ↘



- 1 Rhode Island Ave Metro Station 
- 2 Woodridge Neighborhood Library
- 3 Mount Rainier City Hall
- 4 The Station At Riverdale Park
- 5 College Park City Hall
- 6 College Park Shopping Center
- 7 University of Maryland - College Park
- 8 Lidl
- 9 Greenbelt Metro Station 

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 5:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Weekends 6:00 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

15

minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

15

minutes

Weekends

All-day
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15

minutes

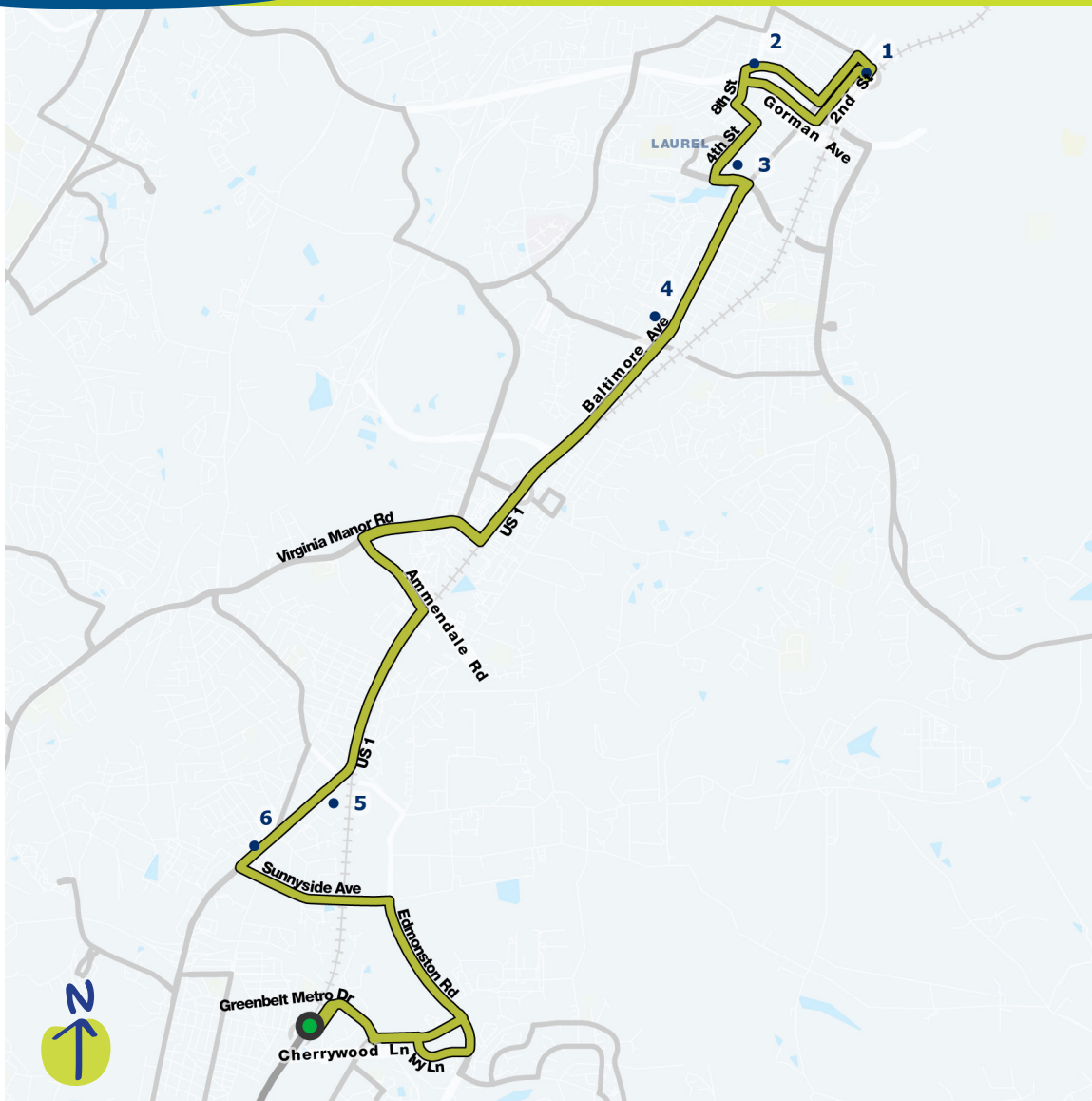
Laurel - Greenbelt

Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus 89M

Where will this route go?



- 1 Laurel MARC Station
- 2 Laurel Library
- 3 Laurel Town Centre
- 4 Shoppers
- 5 Costco
- 6 Chestnut Hill Shopping Center
- 7 Greenbelt Metro Station



When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 5:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Weekends 6:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

15
minutes

Rush Hour
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Weekends

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Greenbelt - Deanwood

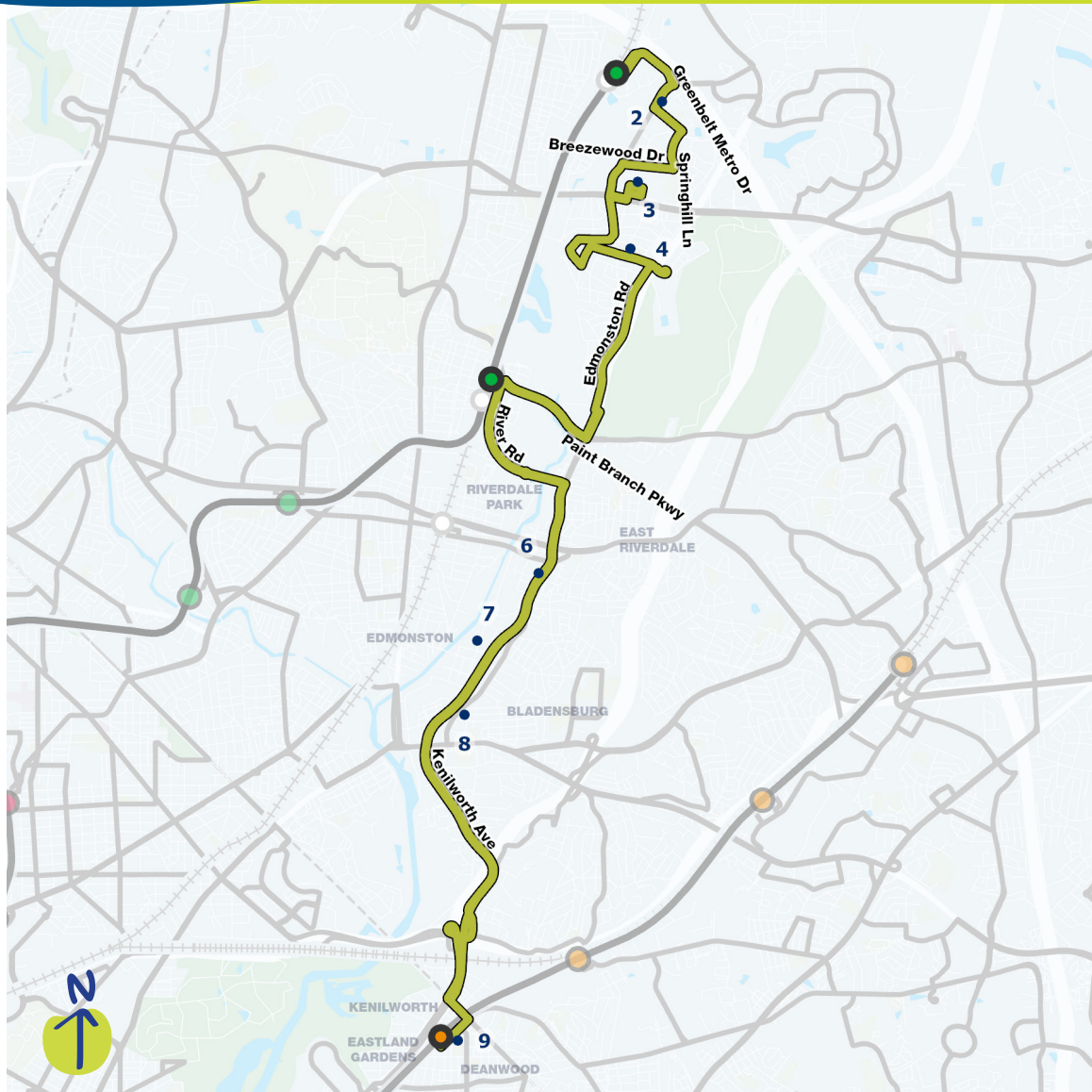
Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus R12, T14

TheBus 16

Where will this route go?



- 1 Greenbelt Metro Station 
- 2 Springhill Lake Recreation Center
- 3 Beltway Plaza Mall
- 4 Berwyn Heights Community Center
- 5 College Park-U of Md Metro Station 
- 6 Savemart Riverdale
- 7 Town of Edmonston
- 8 Bladensburg Town Hall
- 9 Deanwood Recreation Center
- 10 Deanwood Metro Station 

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 5:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Weekends 5:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.

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Cherry Hill - Glenn Dale

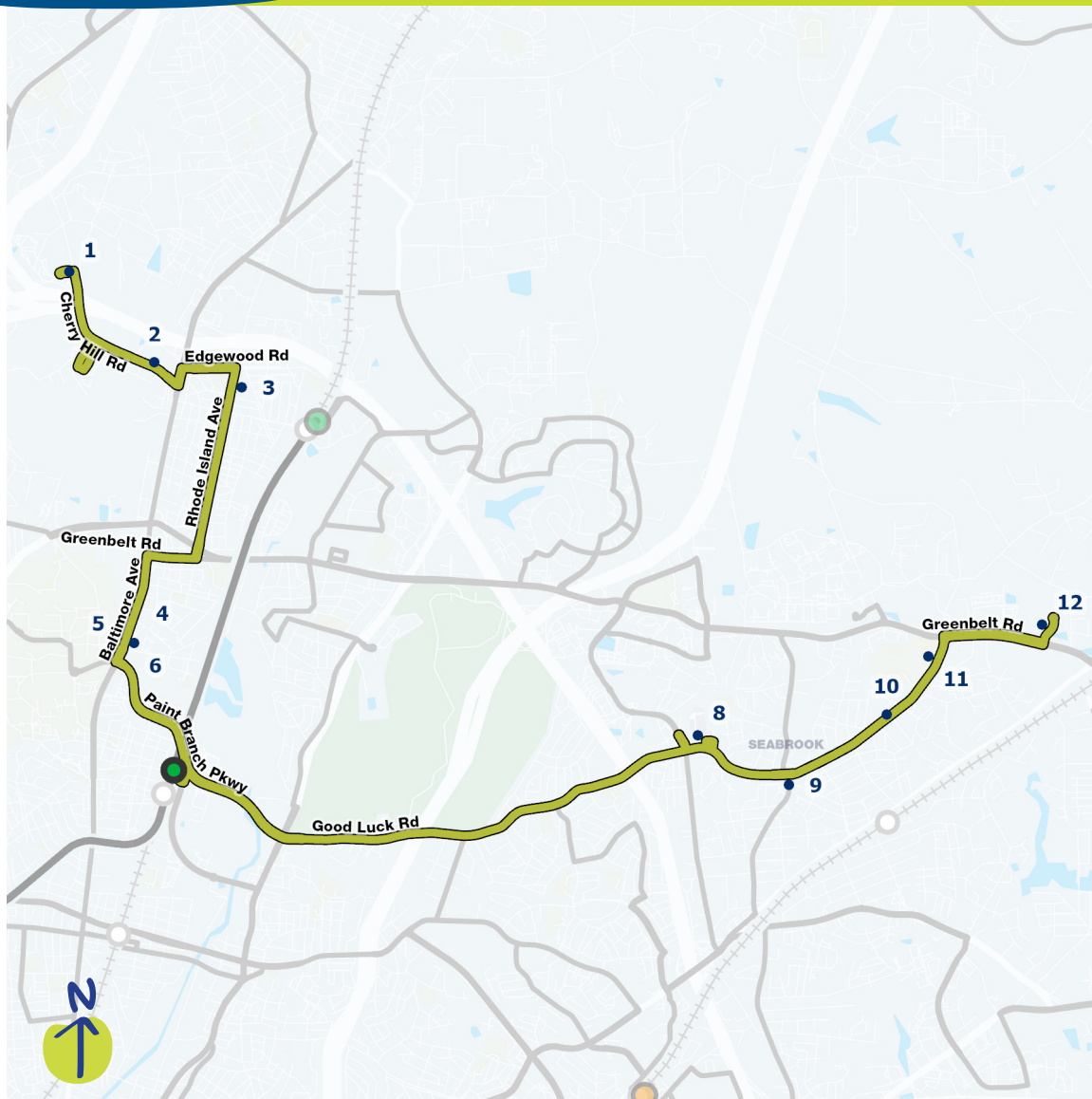
Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus 83, F6, G14

TheBus 14, 17

Where will this route go? ↘



- 1 Cherry Hill Park Campground
- 2 College Park Market Place
- 3 Hollywood Shopping Center
- 4 Target
- 5 University of Maryland - College Park
- 6 College Park City Hall
- 7 College Park-U of Md Metro Station 
- 8 Doctors Community Hospital
- 9 Goodluck Community Center
- 10 Diyanet Center of America
- 11 DuVal High School
- 12 Goddard Corporate Park

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 6:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Weekends 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Weekends

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

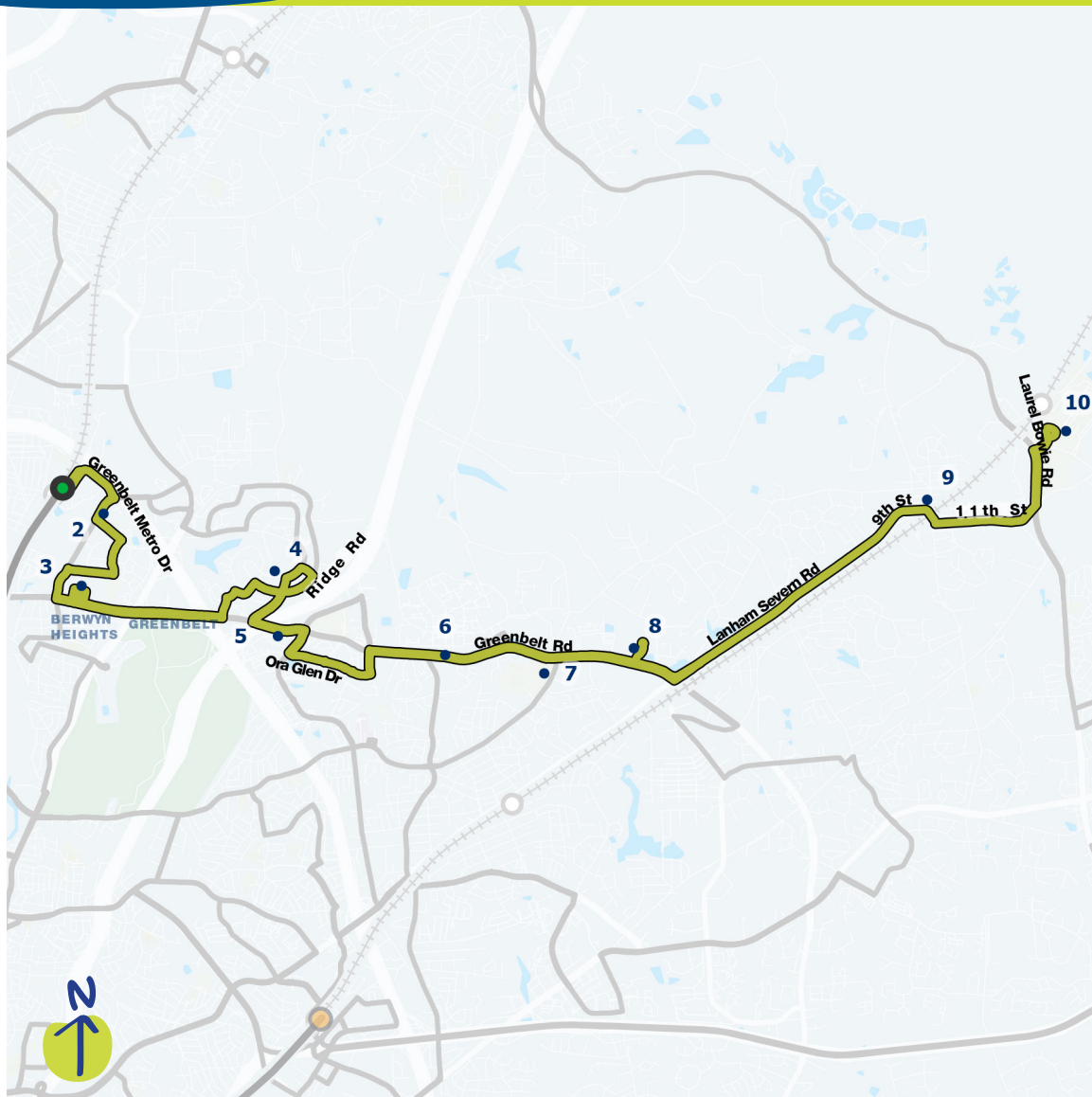
Greenbelt - Bowie State

Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus B27, G14

Where will this route go?



- 1 Greenbelt Metro Station 
- 2 Springhill Lake Recreation Center
- 3 Beltway Plaza Mall
- 4 Greenbelt Community Center
- 5 Greenway Center
- 6 NASA Main Gate
- 7 DuVal High School
- 8 Goddard Corporate Park
- 9 Huntington Community Center
- 10 Bowie State University

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 6:00 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Weekends 6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Weekends

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Greenbelt - New Carrollton

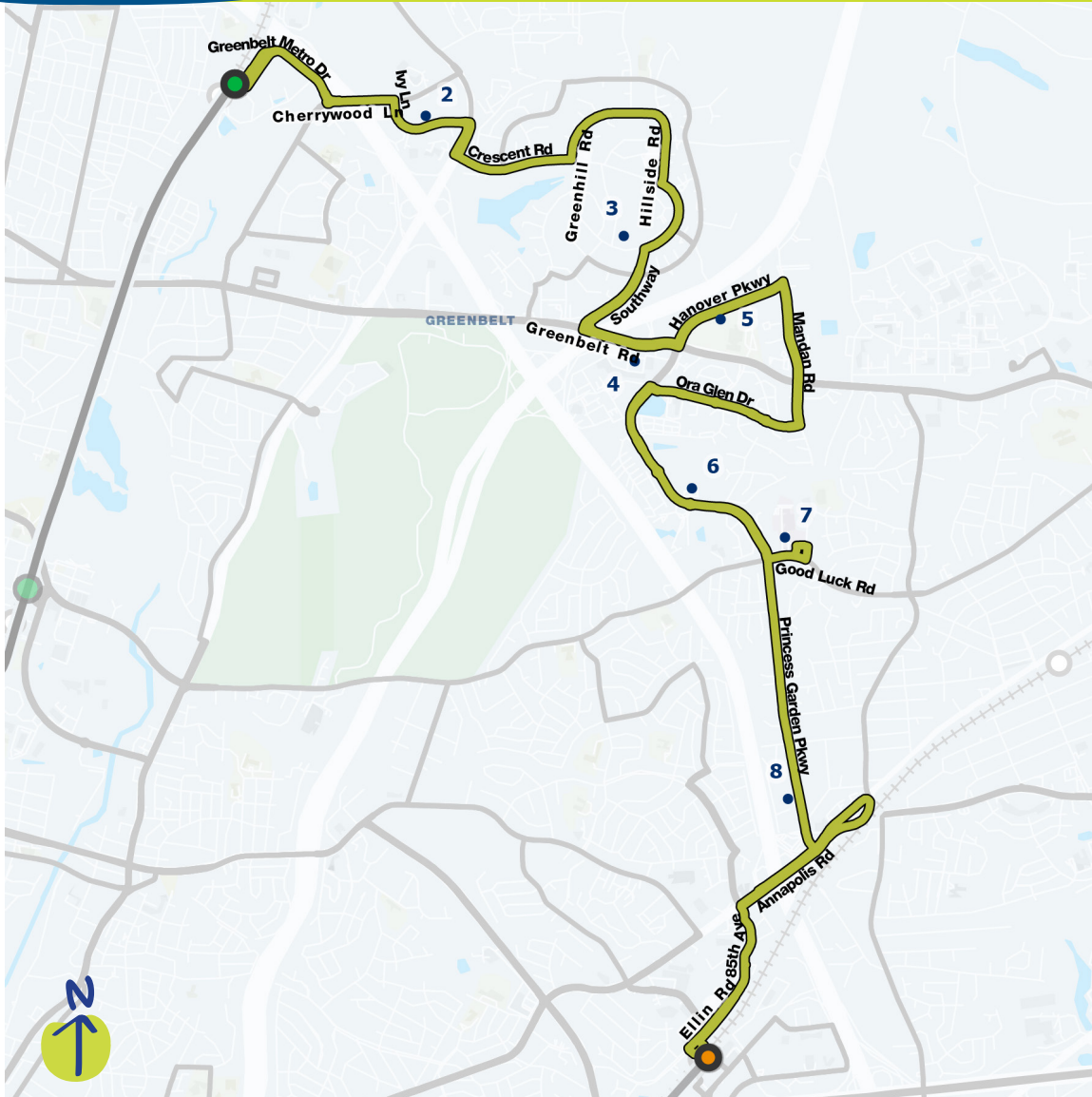
Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus G12

TheBus 11, 16

Where will this route go?



- 1 Greenbelt Metro Station 
- 2 MD/DC Capital Office Park
- 3 Greenbelt Community Center
- 4 Greenway Center
- 5 Eleanor Roosevelt High School
- 6 Schrom Hills Recreation Center
- 7 Doctors Community Hospital
- 8 New Carrollton Municipal Center
- 9 New Carrollton Metro Station 

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 6:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Weekends 6:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Weekends

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Greenbelt - New Carrollton

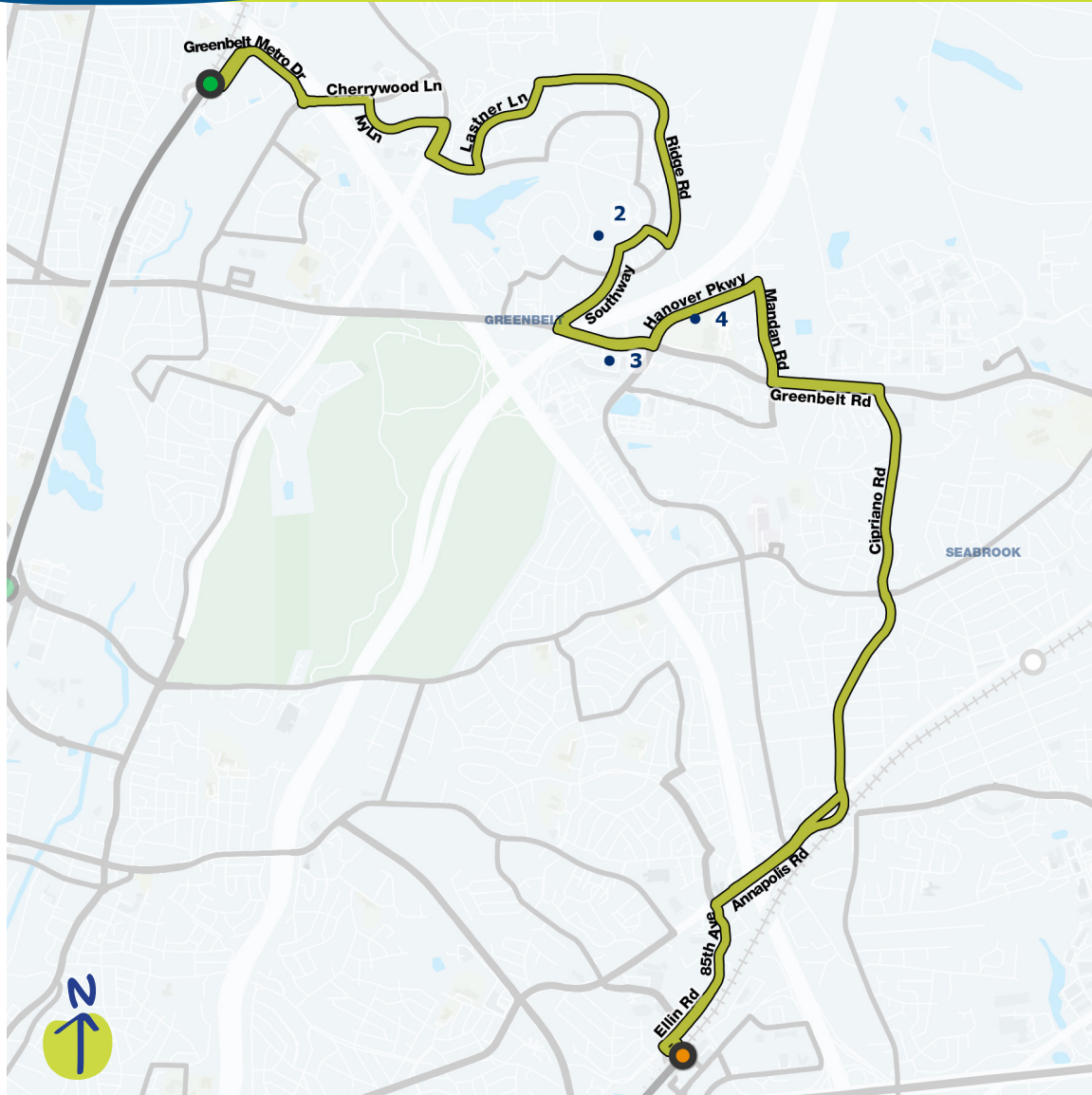
Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Metrobus G12, G14

TheBus 11, 16

Where will this route go?



- 1 Greenbelt Metro Station 
- 2 Greenbelt Community Center
- 3 Greenway Center
- 4 Eleanor Roosevelt High School
- 5 New Carrollton Metro Station 

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 5:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Weekends 6:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

30
minutes

Weekends

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

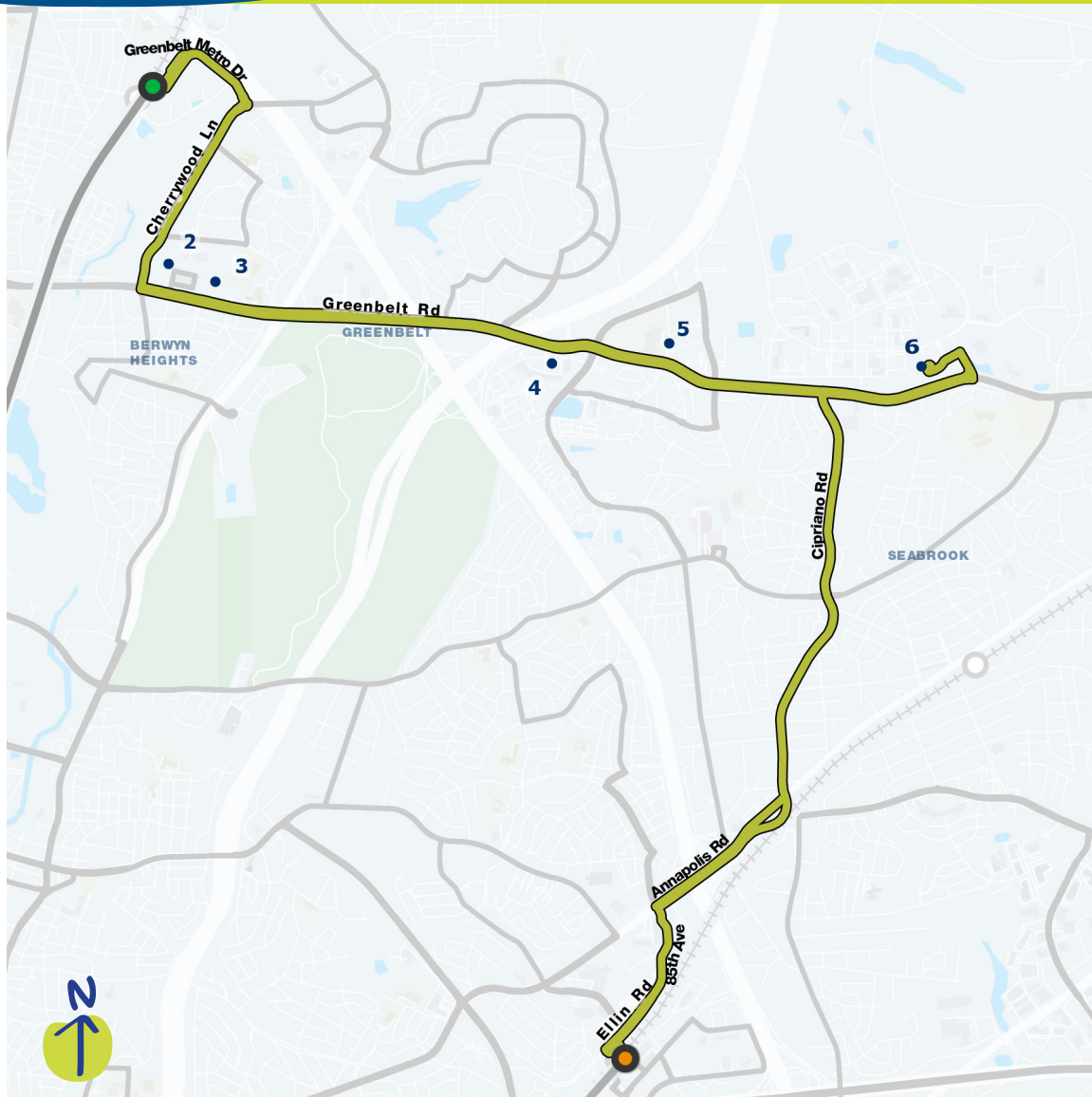
30
minutes

Greenbelt - New Carrollton

Proposed service in the draft Visionary Network

Compare to these current routes:

Where will this route go?



- 1 Greenbelt Metro Station 
- 2 Giant
- 3 Beltway Plaza Mall
- 4 Greenway Center
- 5 Eleanor Roosevelt High School
- 6 NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
- 7 New Carrollton Metro Station 

When will the bus operate?

How often will the bus arrive?

Weekdays 5:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.;
2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Weekends

Weekdays

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

—
minutes

Rush Hour
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

at least every

20
minutes

Weekends

All-day
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

at least every

—
minutes

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Bonita Anderson

Submitting Department: Finance

Item Type: OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Section: OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

Subject:

Selection of Audit Services for FY 2023

Suggested Action:

Reference:

Memorandum, B. Gaymon, 06/15/23

Summary of Auditing Proposals

At the recommendation of the Interim City Manager, the City Treasurer and the Finance Manager, the Mitchell Titus auditing firm is recommended to complete the City's annual audits for the next three years, starting with the fiscal year ending 2023. Subsequent audits would be for the fiscal year ending 2024 and 2025 with an option to extend at the discretion of the City. The Finance Department budgeted \$68,000 in the FY2024 budget to cover auditing costs.

DISCUSSION

On March 21, 2023, the City was informed that our current auditor CohnReznick would no longer be available to conduct the City's annual audit—they are discontinuing services to all state and local governments.

In response to this unexpected notification, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) on April 19, 2023 inviting qualified auditing firms to submit proposals meeting the scope of work stated in the RFP. The RFP was mailed (US Mail) to ten (10) vendors located in the City of Greenbelt; uploaded to the City's website; and published on eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA).

A total of three (3) proposals were received on or before the April 18, 2023 deadline. Fees ranged in price from \$33,345 to \$ 68,000. Since there were fewer than five responses, the staff project team consisting of the City Treasurer; the Finance Manager; and the Interim City Manager held a meeting with each vendor to continue discussions of their respective auditing proposal—to specifically show how their proposed solution would meet the City's needs. All

meetings were held on either Wednesday, June 14th and/or on Thursday, June 15th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. for both days.

RECOMMENDATION

While the Project Team believes all firms are qualified to provide excellent auditing services to the City, staff recommends Mitchell Titus, LLP be selected as the City's new auditing firm with an award not to exceed \$64,700 for the first year; \$67,000 for the second year; and \$69,700 for the third year. Staff believes Mitchell Titus LLP plans and costs represents the highest and best value to the City in terms of service and price.

Mitchell Titus indicates the firm is the nation's largest minority-controlled CPA and business advisory firm and currently serves the Town of La Plata, the City of Mt. Rainier, Maryland General Assembly, Howard County Library System, Harford County Library System and the Town of Dewey Beach, Delaware. In addition, this will be our second year of performing the audit of Maryland's Local Government Insurance Trust. Mitchell Titus confirms the Firm's engagement team has significant experience in delivering ACFRs to the GFOA and emphasizes, one of the partners has been a member of the GFOA for over 20 years.

Another important fact that is helpful to the City is the engagement partner worked for the former audit firm and had a key role in performing the City's financial statement audits in the past—this is a benefit that no other firm can provide and this should help ensure that the audits will be executed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Attachments:

[Memorandum, B. Gaymon, 06/15/23.pdf](#)

[Copy of Summary of Auditing Proposals bg v2.pdf](#)



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 15, 2023

TO: Timothy George
Interim City Manager

FROM: Bertha A. Gaymon
City Treasurer

RE: Summary and Recommendation for New Auditing Firm

BACKGROUND

On March 21, 2023, the City was informed that our current auditor CohnReznick would no longer be available to conduct the City's annual audit—they are discontinuing services to all state and local governments.

With this unexpected notification, it became apparent that immediate steps were necessary if the City had any chance of having its annual audit completed in time for the required submission to the State of Maryland on time. This matter became urgent for several reasons. First, the audited financial statement and the Uniform Financial Statements are required to be submitted on or before October 31 each year and the Federal Single Audit is required shortly thereafter. Additionally, submission to GFOA for the ACFR award is due on or before December 31st each year. It is noted the notification of the City needing a new auditor came slightly over three months before the fiscal year would end and four months before we would normally start the auditing process. Our standard practice includes the City having the initial audit planning meeting in mid-July. Again, in order for the City to have any possibility of meeting these deadlines, we took immediate steps to onboard a new auditing firm.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was released on April 19, 2023 requesting qualified auditing firms to submit a proposal to perform the City's annual audit for the next three years—starting with the fiscal years ending 2023. Subsequent audits would be for the fiscal year ending 2024 and 2025 with an option to extend at the discretion of the City. The RFP was mailed to ten (10) vendors located in the City of Greenbelt; uploaded to the City's website; and published on eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA) on April 19, 2023.

The City received three (3) responses—one from the following firms: 1) SB & Company LLC; 2) Mitchell Titus and 3) HUY LLP. The costs from these auditing firms ranged from \$33,345 to \$69,500 for the first year. Since there were fewer than five responses, the City invited all responding vendors to schedule a meeting to continue discussions of their auditing proposal—to specifically show selected City staff how their proposed solution would meet the City's needs. All meetings were held on either Wednesday, June 14th and/or on Thursday, June 15th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. for both days.

ANALYSIS

The Project Team reviewed the three proposals and found that the functionality of all vendor proposals met the auditing needs of the City. Our analyses confirmed each vendor has the necessary experience and

qualifications required to conduct the City's audit of financial statements. Attached is a summary worksheet that provides pertinent information pulled from the responding auditing firms. The summary shows the number of staff and the experience of the firm's staff who would be assigned to work on the City's audit; the hours required for the audit; the cost of the audit; and the governments the firms have served.

RECOMMENDATION

After thoroughly reviewing the written proposal and meeting with each vendor, staff recommends, and therefore, requests City Council approve the selection of Mitchell Titus, LLP to become the City's new auditing firm with an award not to exceed \$64,700 for the first year; \$67,000 for the second year; and \$69,700 for the third year. Staff believes the Mitchell Titus LLP proposal, approach and costs represent the highest and best value to the City in terms of service and price.

Mitchell Titus is the nation's largest minority-controlled CPA and business advisory firm and currently serves the Town of La Plata, the City of Mt. Rainier, Maryland General Assembly, Howard County Library System, Harford County Library System and the Town of Dewey Beach, Delaware. In addition, this will be our second year of performing the audit of Maryland's Local Government Insurance Trust. Mitchell Titus confirms the firm's engagement team has significant experience in delivering ACFRs to the GFOA and emphasizes, one of the partners has been a member of the GFOA for over 20 years.

Another important fact that is helpful to the City is the engagement partner worked for the former audit firm and had a key role in performing the City's financial statement audits in the past—this is a benefit that no other firm can provide and this should help ensure that the audits will be executed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

City of Greenbelt
Results for Request for Proposals - Auditing Services for FY2023 - FY2025

Firm Name	SB & Company, LLC	Mitchell Titus LLP	UHY LLP
Firm Contact	Bill Seymour Engagement and Client Service Partner 10200 Grand Central Avenue Suite 250 Owings Mills, MD 21117	Daniel Kenney Engagement Partner 200 East Pratt Street Baltimore, MD 21202	Jack Reagan Partner 8601 Robert Fulton Drive Suite 210 Columbia, MD 21046
In Business Since	2005	1974	1968
Proposal Work Plan - Description	35 page technical proposal No Sample ACFR or other reports	36 page technical proposal 2 sample ACFR reports	40 page technical proposal 2 sample ACFR reports
Core Team	4	5	6
Proposed Workplan - Staff Hours			
Partner	15	24	28
Manager	20	34	56
Senior Staff/Associates	82	128	116
Staff Auditors	88	128	100
Others	0	6	0
Total Hours	205	314	300
Experience of Core Team	Engagement Partner - 25 plus Years Audit Partner - 10 Years Audit Manager - 5 Years IT Risk Manager - 30 Years	Engagement Partner - 25 Years Partner - 35 Year Technical Advisor, - 35 Years Uniform Guidance Advisor - 31 Years Sr. Audit Manager, - 15 Years	Engagement Partner - 30 Years Partner - 15 Years Audit Assurance Manager - 5 Years Audit Assurance Manager - 7 Years Sr. Accountant - not provided Audit Specialist - 15 Years
Similar Engagements with Other Governments	Town of University Park-Municipal Town of Myersville - Municipal City of Glenarden - Municipal Town of Ocean City, Maryland Kent County City of Hagerstown Town of Centerville, Maryland Plus Others	New York State Gaming Commission Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority The Port of Authority of New York & New Jers Plus Others	Anne Arundel County Queen Anne's County Dorchester County City of Annapolis Wicomico County Board of Education Plus Others
Cost in Proposal	FY2023 - \$33,345 Not Provided Not Provided	FY2023 -\$64,700 FY2024 - \$67,000 FY2026 - \$69,500	FY2023 -\$68,000 3% - 4% Increase Each Year

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Bonita Anderson

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Section: OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

Subject:

Maryland Municipal League (MML) Legislative Action Requests (LARs)

Suggested Action:

Reference: MML LAR 2019-2023

MML LAR Form

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) is beginning to gear up for the 2024 legislative session and seeking Legislative Action Requests (LAR) from municipalities. The LAR form is now available and needs to be submitted by Friday, June 30, 2023. Each municipality is limited to a maximum of three legislative solutions to municipal problems submitted through the LAR process to be considered by the MML legislative committee as a potential League priority.

Attachments:

[MML LAR - 2019-2023.pdf](#)

[MML LAR form.pdf](#)

Listed below are Greenbelt's LAR submissions over the last five years.

2023

Abatements

Require the State to provide detailed information on abatement requests, both in hand and anticipated, in advance of budget preparations. The lack of information makes it very difficult for municipalities to effectively budget to cover potential abatements.

Constant Yield Tax Rate Notification

Require the State to reword the Constant Yield Tax Rate notice language to be easily understandable. The current required language is both duplicative and difficult to understand and each year our residents ask that we provide a more concise and clearly worded notice.

Equity in Transportation Goals/Analysis

Require that equity be considered when State transportation plans, reports, and goals are developed; altering the membership of the advisory committee on State transportation goals; requiring the Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the Maryland Transportation Administration, to conduct a transit equity analysis and consult with certain communities before announcing any reduction or cancellation of a capital expansion project in the construction program of the Consolidated Transportation Program.

2022

Online Sales Tax Share

Provide additional revenue by sharing sales tax revenue from online sales. This could be done through enabling legislation or revenue sharing.

Single Use Plastics

There is too much plastic in the waste stream and in the environment, particularly in our waterways. Banning single use plastics such as bags, straws, coffee stirrers, single use bottles, etc. will reduce the amount of these items in the waste stream and the environment.

State Maintenance of Sidewalks Adjacent to State Roadways

Sidewalks adjacent to state roadways are often in disrepair and sometimes dangerous conditions. Municipalities do not have the resources or authority to repair and/or make these sidewalks safe. Legislation that would provide necessary funding, at the state level, for the State of Maryland to repair and maintain in good condition sidewalks adjacent to state roadways. It will require necessary funding be allocated annually for upkeep of subject sidewalks.

2021

Housing Discrimination

Pass legislation to prohibit housing discrimination based on source of income. Specifically, discriminatory practices in residential real estate transactions and the sale or rental of a dwelling because of a person's source of income (government or private assistance, self-employment, etc.)

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Consumers and fleets hesitate to purchase/utilize electric vehicles due to a lack of convenient charging stations. Providing funding for electric vehicle infrastructure - in particular fast charging stations, would encourage additional electric vehicle purchases and usage.

2020

Municipal Revenue Source Options

Many municipalities are too reliant on Property Tax revises and need additional options to generate revenues. Request seeks legislation to provide additional revenue sources for municipalities in addition to property taxes. This could include a local option sales tax, a share of online sales taxes or other sources. This could be done through enabling legislation of revenue sharing.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Consumers and fleets hesitate to purchase/utilize electric vehicles due to a lack of convenient charging stations. Providing funding for electric vehicle infrastructure - in particular fast charging stations, would encourage additional electric vehicle purchases and usage.

Ban Single Use Plastics

There is too much plastic in the waste stream and in the environment, particularly in our waterways. This request seeks legislation to ban single-use plastics such as bags, straws, coffee stirrs, single use bottles, etc.

2019

Municipal Revenue Share of Online Sales

Request seeks legislation to provide additional revenue sources for municipalities by sharing sales tax revenues from online sales, through enabling legislation of revenue sharing. This request is consistent with a (recent) Supreme Court decision, tax online sales and provide a municipal share of this revenue.

Oversight of Tree Canopy Maintenance

Power companies engage in vegetation management practices which can negatively impact the health and appearance of the tree canopy in our communities. Provide local governments with more authority over vegetation management by electric companies.

Prohibition on Retro Active Utility Billing

Utility companies can retroactively bill for up to 12 months if they make a mistake in the billing rate code/determination. This can have a detrimental impact on their customers. Seeking legislation to prohibit power companies from retroactively billing a customer when the utility makes a mistake.

2024 MML LEGISLATIVE REQUEST

Name of Municipality, Chapter or Department submitting request:_____

Contact Person/Title_____

Address/City/State/Zip:_____

Telephone numbers: (Work)_____ (Home)_____ E-mail:_____

LAR FORM MUST BE RETURNED VIA MAIL OR E-MAIL NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, JUNE 30, 2023.

1. Describe the problem or situation the request is intended to address:

2. Describe the requested legislation:

3. Describe how the requested legislation would remedy the problem:

4. The proposed legislation would address: _____ Only your municipality
_____ Only municipalities in your county _____ Municipalities in the entire state
_____ All counties and municipalities in the entire state

5. Would the proposed remedy have a significant fiscal impact on your municipality?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Could the problem be resolved by something other than a new law, i.e., action by another level of government or changes in administrative procedures?

2. If administrative remedies have already been pursued, what were they and what was the outcome?

3. What other state and/or local agencies, if any, would be affected by this proposal?

4. Have any state agencies been contacted about the proposal? If yes, what was their reaction?

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Has the League considered this proposal in a previous year? If yes, describe any significant changes in circumstances that might improve its chances of success in 2024:

2. Has this request been considered by the General Assembly in prior sessions? If yes, please provide the bill number, year, and outcome of legislation, if known:

3. Has this proposed legislation been implemented by any other city, county or state? If yes, please describe where it has been implemented and cite any existing law or model code upon which the proposal is based:

Signature of authorized municipal, chapter
or departmental official

Print name & Title

Date

Please return LAR form to:
MML Legislative Committee
1212 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
ATTN: Bill Jorch
410-268-5514
E-mail: abigaild@mdmunicipal.org
& copy billj@mdmunicipal.org

Please indicate the date of the meeting where the governing body of the municipality, chapter or department endorsed/approved this request: _____.

Please complete this form in its entirety. Attach additional sheets, if necessary, as well as documents related to your request. **Please return to MML NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, JUNE 30, 2023.**

How MML Legislative Priority Issues Are Selected

1. The League shall inform all member municipalities, chapters, and departments that they may **submit up to three legislative requests each for consideration** as MML initiatives before the Maryland General Assembly by a deadline selected by the League.
2. The staff reviews these requests and prepares background information for the Legislative Committee.
3. The Legislative Committee meets to discuss these requests and to consider MML priority issues not resolved during the previous session.
4. A legislative request that is the same or as substantially similar to a request that has previously been considered and rejected by the committee twice within a four-year period coinciding with the current term of the General Assembly shall be excluded from consideration by the committee.
5. The LAR submission form requires verification that the elected body of a municipality or the membership of a chapter or department has endorsed a legislative request prior to submission.
6. The committee shall limit legislative sponsorship proposals to the membership for consideration at the fall conference to no more than four (4) non-prioritized items and limit the proposals adopted by the membership to four (4).

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: MEETINGS

Agenda Section: OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

Subject:

* Meetings

Suggested Action:

Attachments:

[meetings.pdf](#)

CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND
25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1891



6/13/2023 12:23 PM

City Council Meetings & Work Sessions
June – July

Work Session – WSSC	Wed.	06/21	7:30 pm
MML Summer Conference (Ocean City)	Sun. – Wed.	06/25 – 06/28	
No Meeting – MML Summer Conference	Mon.	06/26	
No Meeting – MML Summer Conference	Wed.	06/28	
No Meeting	Mon.	07/03	
Work Session – TBD	Wed.	07/05	7:30 pm
Regular Meeting	Mon.	07/10	7:30 pm
Work Session – Advisory Board/Committee Chairs Meeting	Wed.	07/12	7:30 pm
No Meeting	Mon.	07/17	
No Meeting	Wed.	07/19	
No Meeting	Mon.	07/24	
No Meeting	Wed.	07/26	
Four Cities Meeting (Berwyn Heights)	Thur.	07/27	7:00 pm
Work Session – City Manager’s Quarterly Update	Mon.	07/31	7:30 pm
Special Meeting/Closed Session – (Personnel Matters and Pending Legal Matters)	Mon.	07/31	Following WS

This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation, call 301-474-8000. Regular and Special meetings and Work Sessions are open to the public. If special accommodations are required for any disabled person, please call 301-474-8000 or 301-474-3870 no later than 10 a.m. on the meeting day. Deaf individuals are advised to use Video Relay Services (VRS) at 711 or e-mail banderson@greenbeltmd.gov to reach the City Clerk. Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held in the Council Chambers in the Municipal Building (MB) at 25 Crescent Road and virtually by Zoom. Zoom meeting information for public participation is posted on the City’s website at www.greenbeltmd.gov on the meeting calendar.

Bonita Anderson, City Clerk

A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

(301) 474-8000

fax (301) 441-8248
www.greenbeltmd.gov

MD RELAY 711

CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND

25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1891



6/13/2023 12:23 PM

Ready to be scheduled:

Parke Crescent Apartment Complex (*Fall*)
Virtual Meetings Accessibility for Blind and
Visually Impaired
City Contracting Policy
Hotels
Washington Gas
Street Lights (Pepco)
Walk-way fixture
GHI Stakeholder (*August 2*)
Department of Permitting, Inspections &
Enforcement (DPIE)
Greenbelt Station (HOA)/Verde Apartments

For later scheduling:

Zoning Enforcement
Parkway Apartment Owners/GHI (*parking*)
Northway Fields Master Plan
City Manager Updates (Jan, Pre-budget; July &
Sept/Oct)
Meeting with County on Transportation Plan
Museum Plan
Bernard Penney (*Memorial Donation in honor of
Leonie Penney*)
Potential Bond Referendum/Capital Financing
Cemetery Plans
MARC Train Service/ MDOT
Arts & Entertainment District
EV Chargers Five Year Plan
Fleet Vehicles Ten Year Plan

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: MEETINGS

Agenda Section: OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

Subject:

* Stakeholder List

Suggested Action:

Attachments:

[Stakeholder Schedule.pdf](#)

Annual															
Advisory Group Chairs	7/22														
Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station Mgmt.	12/21	12/22													
Greenbelt Center HOAs	3/23														
Greenbelt East HOAs and COAs/Greenbelt East Advisory Coalition	4/22	6/23													
Greenbelt Homes, Inc.	8/22														
Greenbelt Station HOA/Verde Apts.	8/22														
School Board Member	9/21	2/23													
State Highway Administration	11/20	11/22													
Biennial															
Beltsville Ag. Research Center	8/18	11/22													
Beltway Plaza	9/22														
NASA/GSFC	3/22	4/23													
Greenbelt Business Alliance	10/22														
Greenbelt Park NPS	1/22	3/23													
Greenway Shopping Center	12/20	2/23													
Religious/Spiritual Organizations	6/22														
Twice a Year															
County Council Person and At Large Members	5/23														
Meetings as Needed															
Apartments	4/21														
Comcast/Verizon	3/21														
Greenbelt Office Parks															
Greenbelt Watershed Groups	10/19														
Hotels															
PEPCO/WSSC	2/22														
Prince George's Economic Development Corp.	11/21														
Prince George's Planning Board	10/19														
Roosevelt Center Owner	8/20														
University of Maryland	4/15														
WMATA/PGDPW&T (Semi-Annual)	5/22														
Newly Elected/Appointed Officials (Presentation of a Council Regular Meeting)															
County Executive															
School Board CEO															
State's Attorney	1/23														

City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 20, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Section: OTHER BUSINESS 90 minutes (8:30 - 9:45 pm)

Subject:

* Resignation from Advisory Group

Suggested Action:

Reference: Email - J. Parker

Judy Parker have submitted her resignation from the Arts Advisory Board (AAB).

Approval of this item on the consent agenda will indicate the Council's intent to accept her resignation with regret.

Attachments: