

FY21 Budget Requests (C.M. Kabir)

1. Youth Summer Service Scholarship:

The purpose of this summer internship program is to engage neighborhood youth in civic programs and service projects in College Park. This program will be modeled after similar scholarship projects adopted by many other jurisdictions across the country. The Council agreed to approve the youth summer internship request (\$2000) in the FY 2020 budget, however, we decided to work out the details on how this program will work.

2. Proactive Graffiti removal program on private properties

The program will help remove graffiti faster than the way it's performed now. This program will be similar to what other towns and jurisdictions have where the crew would proactively look for graffiti in the neighborhood on a regular basis (every week) and remove them immediately, if possible. For example, the City of Hayward, CA runs a *graffiti buster program*. Hayward also owns and operates the Graffiti Buster Vehicle and offers graffiti abatement services to private and commercial properties, in addition to removing graffiti on its own public right of way:

<https://user.govoutreach.com/hayward/faq.php?cmd=shell&goparms=cid%3D11999>. The City may have an MOU with the County and State, allowing the City removing them immediately on their R.O.W. Currently graffiti is often found for many days without being removed, unless residents report them to the City. They make the neighborhood look dirty and unwelcome guests and visitors.

3. LED lights on selected neighborhood streets

As the City is striving with its sustainable initiatives, it should consider replacing some of the aging, energy inefficient streetlights, with more lasting, environmentally friendly and energy efficient lights. Pepco offers special incentives to its commercial customers to replace the old streets lights with energy efficient lights.

<https://homeenergysavings.pepco.com/business/street-lighting>. Energy efficient LED lights offer reduced electricity bill.

A few years back, the City of Laurel installed 100 energy efficient LED lights from Washington Boulevard and all along Main Street. Since Laurel put the lights in a month ago, it has seen a 65 percent drop in electric use. All of Laurel's traffic signals are already LED lights. That project started about 10 years ago, and the savings have been significant

<https://www.cityoflaurel.org/comm/press-releases/9400-laurel-goesgreen-main-street-led-lights>.

The City, at a minimum, should consider a pilot program, with a goal to replace streetlights on some of City's main streets (having more pedestrian traffic) with energy efficient LED lights.

4. Safety improvement on Edgewood Rd at Rt 1 (Possible Small CIP funded by POS)

The intersection at Edgewood Road and Route 1 is very unsafe. There is only one eastbound lane on Edgewood road, where vehicles from Exit 25B and also from Route 1's northbound lane enters the Hollywood neighborhood, often at high speeds. The turning radius is very sharp and thus, fast turning cars and large buses often pose danger to other vehicles, bikers and specially for pedestrian walking on the sidewalk on Edgewood Rd at this intersection. Several years ago, the SHA took up a small project and recommended to add one more in-bound lane to Edgewood from Route 1 and I-495 in-bound ramp (currently there is one lane). They also recommended to add one out-bound lanes from Edgewood to Route 1 (currently there are two lanes). Unfortunately, the SHA has shelved the project and has told us that they have no plan to improve the intersection in near future.

Given the public safety aspect of this very busy intersection, something needs to be done soon. The City could use a part of the State's Program Open Space (POS) grant to acquire a small parcel from the adjacent owner of the property at the north east corner of the property and 1 lane each to the east and west bound Edgewood Road. Several years ago, the City assisted the property owner with a grant to demolish the building and redevelop the property. This could have also allowed the improvement of the intersection as part of the declaration of covenant with the City. The property owner has told us they are having difficulties in getting the parcel redevelop due to the very challenging configuration of the parcel.



5. Annual Spring Parade on Rhode Island Avenue

Several residents, especially many longtime residents have expressed interest in the revival of the annual spring parade on Rhode Island Avenue from Duvall Field to Hollywood Shopping Center. Community members, high school bands, military units, fire departments, scouts, local sports teams, etc took part in this annual spring event. There was a reviewing stand at Duval Field and according to some long time residents, awards were given to different groups in the parade. Opening day baseball/softball games were held after the parade. It was very much well attended.

The revival of the parade will be an excellent opportunity to bring the community together through inclusive activities that appeal to a wide range of residents, as the City is investing more in more recreational programs throughout the City. An annual parade may potentially bring new visitors to the City which can lead to an economic benefit.

As part of the 75th anniversary, the City plans to hold a similar parade from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. down Rhode Island Avenue to Duvall Field. The City should continue hosting the event in coming years.



6. [Pilot] Age-in-Place assistance grant to low income seniors with disability:

Some of City's low-income senior residents are forced to leave their homes when they age and face disability issues at their old age. Often time, the outdoor stairs to their homes need to be replaced by disability ramps. Depending on the configuration of their homes, it may be expensive to build these ramps.

Currently, the County / State offers some general assistance grants to qualified seniors to repair their homes and address accessibility issues. Unfortunately, Many of City's low-income seniors do not qualify these grants due to their income level or due to a long waiting period. <https://pgccouncil.us/282/SeniorAssistance-Programs>

With the improved "Aging-in-Place" goal in mind, the City should explore a program, at least on a pilot basis, where the City could set aside a small grant fund assisting and keeping City's aging population to stay at their homes. Other jurisdictions and towns across the nation offer similar assistance program. For example, the "Lifespan Friendly Homes Program in New River Valley", provides low income homeowners with assistance to obtain low or no cost modifications to address issues that inhibit accessibility to essential parts of their home:

https://www.vadars.org/vb/c/downloads/AginginPlaceActionPlan_FinalDraft_6%2025%2015.pdf

7. Murals in Hollywood:

Several years ago, a project was completed by the “Neighborhood Design Center” to find ways to help revitalize the Hollywood Shopping district. It produced façade redesign concepts for selected properties which we used as a tool to help interested property owners/businesses in improving their storefronts with our then new grant program for that purpose. We had one property owner improve their façade as a result. One of the group’s recommendations was to create murals on the walls of the shops in the commercial district. For example, the concept design included a mural on the side wall of the building where the Hollywood Pharmacy is located. Other potential areas could include the side of the new MoM’s building, on/near the metro path, the beltway overpass on Rhode Island avenue, the tunnel at Davis field near the end of Kenesaw Street. A small project could include the creation of such murals in the Hollywood commercial district. Funds could come from state grants supporting City’s Business and Façade Improvement grant program.

8. Completion of fitness / walking trail around Hollywood Shopping Center

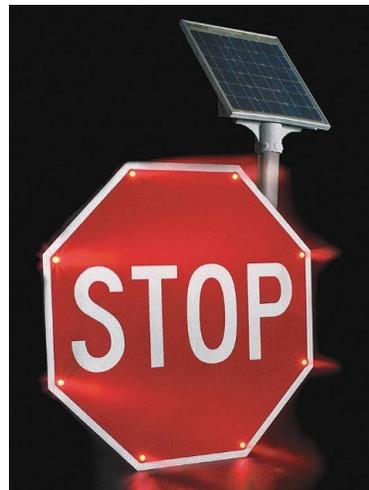
When the Hollywood Streetscape project will be completed, the 3 sides around the shopping center will have walkable fitness paths. To help improve residents’ health and wellness, the project’s original plan (in 2017) called for installation of a complete wellness circuit, including exercise stations, along Narragansett Parkway to provide a recreational opportunity (please see below). Due to the “Daylighting” of Narragansett Run feasibility study, the part of the trail along Narragansett Parkway couldn’t be completed. Many of our north College Park residents are still looking forward to seeing the complete walking trail. A small CIP project could help fund the fourth and final section of the fitness trail along Narragansett Parkway.



9. Blinker Stop Flashing LED STOP Sign

Blinker Stop LED STOP signs provide greater awareness for new, high-risk and high-incidence intersections where static signs are ineffective. Other jurisdictions typically use these stop signs at the intersections having frequent issues with stop sign violations and where high-speed major roads intersect lower-speed secondary roads. For example, the City of Laurel uses a form of blinker LED stop signs which are movable and are attached to the stationary regular stop signs.

The City could consider installing them first at some of the high traffic intersections, such as on Edgewood Road (at 49th Ave. near the Hollywood Elementary school, 51st Ave, 52nd Place and 53rd Ave).



10. Bus shelters

The City should consider expanding the bus shelter program to other busy bus stops. These shelters provide bus riders protection from rain and heat during summer. The two stops residents have asked to add bus shelter include (a) Route 1 (near the Dunkin store) and (b) on westbound Edgewood Rd, near Rhode Island Ave.

11. Increase Use of Duvall Field Concession Stand

The City invested a considerable fund (\$1.3 million) to replace the old concession building by a new one. Unfortunately, the building has been rarely used since it was replaced. In FY19, the City spent a small fund to buy an outdoor grill (stored inside). Unfortunately, it's unknown if the grill has been used at all.

Several years ago, the old concession building could be seen very busy during the game days. Hot dogs, burgers, sausage/pepper subs and steaks were cooked and sold from inside the concession building during game days. The building used to have a double wide electric grill to prepare burgers, steak and sausages and boiled hot dogs and finished on the grill. It also had a steam cabinet to keep the food at the correct temperature. A City resident used to have a food server license. Another long-time resident used to be in charge of cooking and serve food from inside.

In order to provide similar increased use, two main steps need to be taken (according to staff memo on March 15, 2018). Both steps have some budgetary impacts:

- a) The City could assist interested residents (s) with scholarships to get food handler license (moderate Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Priority Food Service Facility license). To obtain certification, an individual must take an examination from an accredited organization and file an application with the Health Department.
- b) Additional kitchen equipment would also need to be purchased and installed to support the change from a low hazard to a moderate hazard facility. This might include a stove or burners, oven, steamer, deep fryer, grill, griddle, microwave or hot plate depending on the foods to be prepared and served. Proper cooking exhaust ventilation is a requirement and the concessions building would need to be modified to provide this.

12. Free Parking for College Park residents at the downtown shopping centers:

Several residents have told that one of the impediments for them to go to College Park downtown businesses is the parking fee they need to pay to park their cars near the businesses there. The City has recently taken steps in removing those impediments by making the downtown garage free of charge during summer. It will be also helpful to make the parking in downtown shopping centers free for City residents.

13. Interactive Online College Park's History Project:

Currently, a few printed materials (books and reports) are available about the history of College Park's various neighborhoods (Lakeland, Daniels Park, and Hollywood), and the University of Maryland. Unfortunately, there isn't any consolidated interactive online website that can provide the residents and the visitors the rich history of College Park. City recently bought online Interactive software (<http://foleon.com>) to produce quality interactive content of the monthly Municipal Scene. This software or other free interactive media software could be used to produce the interactive consolidated College Park's History web portal. The project could further collect additional artifacts (photographs etc.) from City's longtime residents, in addition to what can be found in existing materials. Furthermore, the project could cover the history of City's other neighborhoods which haven't been included in the existing history materials. These neighborhoods may include Berwyn, Yarrow, and College Park Woods.

Funds could come from the annual Council internship funds (up to \$5000). A few years ago, the internship fund was used to produce the history of Hollywood and Daniels Park neighborhoods.

14. Commemorative Bench Dedication program:

Commemorative Bench (and possibly tree) dedication program may offer members of our community a thoughtful and distinctive way to recognize a special person or occasion. In addition to providing a unique honor, commemorative benches contribute to the beauty and character of city's landscape, enhance the visitor experience, and provide financial support for our renowned living collections. Many towns and jurisdictions across the country offer similar programs. Here are a few examples:

https://www.longbeachtownship.com/images/memorial_bench_program20140616.pdf

<https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/departments/public-works/boardwalk-bench-dedication/>

https://www.sugarlandtx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/107/bench-treebrochure_000?bidId=

<https://www.arboretum.harvard.edu/support/commemorative-bench-program/>