

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 1154
Appropriations

(Delegate Hayes, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Program Open Space - Baltimore City Grants - Use of Grant Funds

This bill modifies allocations (established under Chapter 10 of 2016) of specified amounts of Program Open Space (POS) State funding to specified park projects in Baltimore City in fiscal 2018. The bill also allocates a portion of POS State funding committed for park projects in Baltimore City in fiscal 2019 (also pursuant to Chapter 10 of 2016) to specified projects in specified amounts.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not change the level of POS State funding.

Local Effect: None. The bill does not change the amount of POS State funding that Baltimore City receives.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill modifies existing allocations of a portion of the \$3.5 million of POS State funding committed for park projects in Baltimore City in fiscal 2018 to specified projects in specified amounts, as follows:

- reduces the amount that must be used for the Herring Run Park project from \$500,000 to \$400,000;

- reduces the amount that must be used for the Clifton Park project from \$600,000 to \$500,000;
- requires the use of \$300,000 for athletic field renovations at Gwynns Falls Park instead of for the James Mosher Park project; and
- requires that \$200,000 be used for an added project: field lights and other improvements at Frederic B. Leidig Recreation Center.

The amounts allocated under Chapter 10 of 2016 for Patterson Park (\$300,000) and the Druid Hill Park Trail Head (\$300,000) in fiscal 2018 are unchanged.

The bill also requires a portion of the \$5.5 million of POS State funding committed for park projects in Baltimore City in fiscal 2019 to be used for certain of those projects in the following amounts: (1) \$100,000 – Herring Run Park; (2) \$100,000 – Clifton Park; and (3) \$100,000 – field lights and other improvements at Frederick B. Leidig Recreation Center.

Current Law: Chapter 10 of 2016 modified the amount of the State’s share of POS funding that must be allocated for direct grants to Baltimore City for projects which meet park purposes. In place of the requirement existing at the time that Baltimore City receive at least \$1.5 million in direct grants each fiscal year, Chapter 10 requires that Baltimore City receive direct grants in the amount of \$1.5 million in fiscal 2017, \$3.5 million in fiscal 2018, \$5.5 million in fiscal 2019, and \$6.0 million in fiscal 2020 and each subsequent fiscal year. It also requires that a portion of the \$3.5 million of the direct grants in fiscal 2018 be used for capital purposes related to specified projects, in accordance with specified amounts: \$500,000 – Herring Run Park; \$600,000 – Clifton Park; \$300,000 – Druid Hill Park Trail Head; \$300,000 – James Mosher Park; and \$300,000 – Patterson Park.

Background: POS acquires and improves outdoor recreation and open space areas for public use. The program also preserves unique natural areas that are home to rare and endangered species. The State’s goal is to conserve these lands before unaffordable land prices or development makes the task impossible. Transfer tax revenue is the primary source of funding for POS and other land preservation programs, supplemented by general obligation bond funding in recent years. POS consists of a State and a local component.

The State component includes land acquisition funding, capital development funding, and, as noted above, a direct grant of \$1.5 million in fiscal 2017, increasing to \$6.0 million in fiscal 2020 and following years, to Baltimore City for park projects (which is in addition to funding the city receives under the local component of POS).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Baltimore City; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 2017
mm/lgc Third Reader - March 21, 2017
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