

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 614 (Baltimore County Senators)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Community Parks and Playgrounds Program - Baltimore County and Howard
County - Expansion**

This bill expands the jurisdictions eligible for funding under the Community Parks and Playgrounds Program to include Baltimore and Howard counties.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not change the amount of funding spent under the Community Parks and Playgrounds Program. The Governor's proposed FY 2021 capital budget includes \$2.5 million in general obligation (GO) bonds for the program.

Local Effect: The bill does not affect the amount of Community Parks and Playgrounds funding allocated to local governments overall. However, Baltimore and Howard counties benefit by being newly eligible for funding under the program, and the resulting increased competition for grants may limit funding available to municipalities and Baltimore City.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Under the Community Parks and Playgrounds Program, funding in the form of flexible grants is made available to the governing bodies of municipal corporations and Baltimore City to (1) rehabilitate, expand, improve, or maintain existing parks; (2) purchase land to create new parks; (3) develop new parks; (4) purchase and install playground equipment in urban neighborhoods and rural areas throughout the State; or (5) be used for environmentally oriented parks and recreation projects. The

program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Program Open Space.

The Governor's proposed fiscal 2021 capital budget includes \$2.5 million in GO bond funding for 20 projects in 20 municipalities (in 15 different counties). The Governor's five-year *Capital Improvement Program* includes \$2.5 million in GO bond funding each fiscal year through fiscal 2025.

DNR's *FY 2021 Grant Proposal Guide* for the program indicates that grants may be for up to 100% of the project cost and are selected on a competitive basis. DNR reviews applications and makes recommendations for grant selections, which are forwarded to the Department of Budget and Management for potential inclusion in the Governor's proposed capital budget. Once the capital budget is approved by the General Assembly, selected projects are submitted for State Clearinghouse review and to the Board of Public Works for final approval.

Baltimore and Howard counties are the two counties in the State that do not include municipalities.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: HB 203 (Delegate Hettleman, *et al.*) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Baltimore and Howard counties; Department of Legislative Services

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