

Chapter 5

Countywide Projects

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has many capital projects that are not for one particular school, but rather are programmed to meet the needs of many schools across the county. These projects involve multiyear plans with different schools scheduled each year, and projects are referred to as countywide projects. The assessment and selection process for many of these projects is carried out through an annual review process that involves school principals, maintenance, planning, and construction staff.

The primary countywide projects that address the physical environment in schools include: compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA); Asbestos Abatement; Fire Safety Code Upgrades; Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC); Indoor Air Quality (IAQ); Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR); and Roof Replacement. These projects require an assessment of each school relative to the needs of other schools and the development of schedules based on available funding. Some projects, such as ADA, Asbestos Abatement, Fuel Tank Management, and Stormwater Management are driven by mandates that require an evaluation and action plan in order to meet federal, state, and local regulations.

Maintenance and replacement projects are critical to keep aging school facilities operational. As schools age, they are placed on a maintenance and repair ladder, moving from minor repairs to outright replacement of major systems. PLAR and the countywide projects that focus on roof replacements and mechanical system rehabilitations are essential to the preservation of the school systems' infrastructure. Intensive maintenance and rehabilitation efforts to extend the useful life of schools occur through the following projects: HVAC, PLAR, and Roof Replacement.

The Improved (Safe) Access to Schools project provides improved vehicular and pedestrian access to schools. MCPS staff works with the Schools and Transportation Efficiencies Planning (STEP) Committee to identify solutions to safety concerns. The County's Department of Public Works and Transportation appropriates funds to improve roads and sidewalks on county property when needed. This project will continue to address access improvements on Board of Education–owned property at MCPS facilities.

The relocatable classroom project will continue to provide relocatable classrooms to meet space needs that cannot be accommodated by permanent construction. Many of the relocatable classrooms have aging heating and air conditioning systems, ceilings, lights, and carpets that are reaching the end of their useful lives and must be replaced if MCPS is to continue using the units for educational programs. Units are assessed for condition on an annual basis. Those units that are in poor condition are considered for replacement.

MCPS is committed to providing the educational technology necessary to allow all students to access information from around the world. The Board of Education adopted a comprehensive Educational Technology Policy in December 1993 and a strategic plan entitled "The Plan for Educational Technology Implementation" in May 1997. The Technology Modernization project, first introduced in the FY 2003–2008 CIP, provides needed technology updates to schools' technology hardware, software, and network infrastructure on a scheduled replacement cycle. The objective of the Technology Modernization program is to have a student to computer ratio of 4:1. Up-to-date technology enhances student learning through access to information available online and through the ability to use the latest instructional software. Up-to-date technology in schools and offices also is critical for the reporting required by *No Child Left Behind* and for the implementation of state-proposed online testing strategies.

The Restroom Renovations project, first introduced in the FY 2005–2010 CIP, will provide needed modifications to specific areas of restroom facilities. In FY 2004, a study was conducted to evaluate restrooms for all schools that were built or renovated before 1985. A list was compiled and schools were rated based on an evaluation method using a preset number scale for the assessment of the existing plumbing fixtures, accessories, and room finish materials. All 47 schools identified on this list had restroom renovations completed by FY 2010. In FY 2010, a second round of assessments was completed, which included a total of 110 schools. Based on funding, the first 71 schools were proposed for renovation in the FY 2011–2016 CIP and the remaining 39 schools are proposed for renovation in the Recommended FY 2013–2018 CIP. (See appendix G for the list of schools and corresponding ratings.)

Three new countywide projects are recommended in the FY 2013–2018 CIP. The first is the Modifications to Holding, Special Education and Alternative Centers project which includes funds for feasibility studies at four holding centers, two special education learning centers, and one alternative program center as a result of the Facility Assessment with Criteria and Testing (FACT) assessment that occurred from December 2010–June 2011. The second is the Transportation Depots project which includes funds to address the current overcrowded conditions at existing depots, as well as the proposed relocation of the Shady Grove Depot as a result of a comprehensive relocation of county facilities within the Shady Grove Sector Plan. The third is the Food Services Equipment Replacement project which includes funds to provide new equipment for the Food Distribution Facility due to the relocation of the current facility as a result of Montgomery County's Smart Growth Initiative.

A brief description of each countywide project follows.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

Funds from this project support compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the accessibility of school facilities for persons with disabilities. The items most frequently provided are ramps, elevators, and wider door openings for wheelchair accessibility. Accessible bathrooms and water fountains also are funded as part of this program. The goal is to provide access to all spaces in MCPS buildings. In some cases, programs have been relocated to accommodate students until full accessibility can be met. Funding for this program will continue beyond the six-year planning period.

Asbestos Abatement

Federal and state regulations require the management and ultimately, the removal of asbestos from schools. Funds from this project support compliance with these mandates. As a cost saving measure, a special group of MCPS employees has been trained to remove asbestos in a manner that complies with strict safety requirements. However, projects that are larger than this group can accommodate are competitively bid and are funded through this project. Funding for this program will continue beyond the six-year planning period.

Building Modifications and Program Improvements

This project will provide facility modifications and program improvements to schools that are not scheduled for a modernization or addition in the foreseeable future.

Current Replacements/Modernizations

This is a summary project for all modernization projects that have planning or construction expenditures for either FY 2013 or FY 2014. Modernization projects are moved from the Future Replacements/Modernizations project to this project when expenditures are approved by the County Council in the first two years of the CIP. Appendix E of this document lists the priority order of modernizations, based on FACT and Educational Program assessments.

Design and Construction Management

This project provides funding for the MCPS staff necessary to assure the successful planning, design, and construction of the capital projects contained in the six-year CIP.

Energy Conservation

This project funds the materials necessary to develop strategies to reduce energy consumption. These strategies include improving building mechanical systems, retrofitting building lighting, and updating associated temperature control systems. This project will continue indefinitely.

Facility Planning

In order to assure the availability of accurate cost estimates for facility construction, a feasibility study process has been instituted. Architects are hired for each new or modernization project to develop and evaluate several feasible options that

meet the project's needs. For each option, a cost estimate is prepared and an analysis is performed to determine the most cost-effective solution. The study of options is presented to the Board of Education and the project cost is established. This "preplanning" information is then used to develop a budget for submission to the County Council for funding. The feasibility study process helps to produce a clear understanding of the feasibility, scope, and cost for each project.

Fire Safety Code Upgrades

This project funds building modifications to meet Fire Marshall and life safety code requirements. Facility modifications to be addressed in this project are sprinklers, escape windows, exit signs, fire alarm devices, and exit stairs.

Food Services Equipment Replacement

This project will provide funding for replacement equipment for Montgomery County Public Schools Food Distribution Facility due to the relocation of the current facility as a result of Montgomery County's Smart Growth Initiative.

Future Replacements/Modernizations

This is a summary of all modernization projects that do not have expenditures in the first two years of the CIP. The priority order for modernizations is determined by the FACT and Educational Program assessments, and is detailed in Appendix E. Schools are added to the schedule in the out-years of the CIP as the County Council approves funding. Projects shown within this project will be moved to the Current Replacements/Modernizations project once the County Council approves expenditures for a modernization in either the first or second fiscal year of the CIP.

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Mechanical Systems Replacement

This project provides an orderly replacement of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in MCPS facilities not scheduled for modernization.

Improved (Safe) Access to Schools

This project addresses vehicular access to schools. Projects may involve the widening of a street or road, obtaining rights-of-way for vehicular access, or the addition of entrances to school sites. The list of specific school projects is approved annually by the County Council.

Indoor Air Quality Improvements

This project provides mechanical retrofits and building envelope modifications necessary to address Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) problems at schools. In the past, funds in this project also addressed lead abatement remediation at identified schools and will be used to develop specific remediation and work plans for schools that have complete test results and lead source assessment.

Land Acquisition

The Land Acquisition project is used to acquire land for new schools and the expansion of smaller school sites. Sites are

initially identified through the Comprehensive Master Plan process administered by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Prior to site selection, a Site Selection Advisory Committee (SSAC) is convened.

Modifications to Holding, Special Education and Alternative Centers

This project provides funding for feasibility studies at four holding centers, two special education learning centers, and one alternative program center as a result of the Facility Assessment with Criteria and Testing (FACT) assessment that occurred from December 2010–June 2011. Funds will be requested in a future CIP to address the modifications to these facilities.

Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR)

This project provides funding for the repair or replacement of major site improvements and building systems that have reached the end of their useful life. Some of the items that this project covers are field rehabilitation, exterior resurfacing (including driveways and tennis courts), interior partitions, doors, lighting, windows, security gates, bleachers, communications systems, and flooring. All projects are evaluated, and a six-year plan is in place for the repair of needed items. The list of projects is evaluated annually.

Rehabilitation and Renovation of Closed Schools (RROCS)

MCPS has retained some closed schools for use as office space, holding schools, or alternative schools. Some of these facilities have reopened as schools. Funds from this project are used to rehabilitate buildings to meet current codes and to provide appropriate educational spaces.

Relocatable Classrooms

MCPS utilizes relocatable classrooms on an interim basis to accommodate student enrollment in overutilized facilities and for class-size reduction initiatives until a long-term solution is in place. Some are owned by MCPS, some are owned by the State of Maryland, and others are leased. This project provides funding for the relocation, leasing, acquisition, and repair of relocatable classroom units.

Restroom Renovations

The project will provide needed modifications to specific areas of restroom facilities. A study was conducted to evaluate restrooms for all schools that were built or renovated before 1985. A second study was conducted in FY 2010 to provide restroom renovations at additional schools. Schools were rated based on an evaluation method using a preset number scale for the assessment of the existing plumbing fixtures, accessories, and room finish materials. See appendix G for the list of schools in the project.

Roof Replacement

Roofs that are in need of repair or replacement are funded through this project. The schedule of yearly repairs/replacements is determined according to priority. The roofs are expected to have a life cycle of approximately 20 years.

School Security Systems

This project provides funding for security camera systems at MCPS high school facilities. Currently, all high schools have security systems. At this time, no middle schools have security camera systems. Consideration is being given to install security systems in middle schools.

Stormwater Discharge and Water Quality Management

This project will provide funding to plan and implement a variety of pollution prevention measures related to stormwater discharge from our school facilities as required by federal and state laws. Also, this project will provide funding to meet State of Maryland requirements that all industrial sites be surveyed and a plan developed to mitigate stormwater runoff.

Technology Modernization

This project will provide needed technology updates for the original Global Access program schools. This project will provide a better student to computer ratio, best practices for dynamic access to information networks, modern methodologies for teacher training, and application of current theory and practice to prepare students for the 21st century.

Transportation Depots

This project will provide funding to address the current overcrowded conditions at existing depots, as well as the proposed relocation of the Shady Grove Depot as a result of a comprehensive relocation of county facilities within the Shady Grove Sector Plan. Funds in the Recommended FY 2013–2018 CIP are intended to begin planning for future expansion and provide minor modifications to existing depots.

WSSC Compliance

This project will provide maintenance and upgrades to our existing grease removal devices located in our kitchen facilities throughout the school system in order to be in compliance with WSSC regulations.

