

# 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 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); 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, 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.

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. A comprehensive Accessibility Evaluation of MCPS school facilities has been completed over the past two years. MCPS contracted with an independent engineering firm to assess the facilities and collect data according to requirements of 28 CFR Part 35, the 2010 ADA Design Standards for Accessible Design, and the State of Maryland Building Code sections related to accessibility. Summarized tables of the data collected can be found on the Department of Facilities Management website.

### **Alternative Education Programs**

MCPS operates a program that supports students in Grades 6-12. The program is intended to support students who have been unsuccessful in their home schools for a variety of reasons. The program currently operates out of two locations in Rockville: the Blair G. Ewing Center campus on Avery Road, as well as the North Lake Center, which is typically used as a holding school. This project would fund the planning and construction of a permanent location located at the Spring Mill Center. The building on Avery Road, while larger than the program needs it to be, is outdated and will need to be addressed in a future CIP request.

### **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 provides facility modifications and program improvements to schools that are not scheduled for capital project in the near future.

### **Central Office Headquarters (CESC Replacement)**

The existing Carver Educational Services Center (CESC) building is in need of major repairs. This project will fund the planning and construction of a new central office headquarters located on the CESC and former Rock Terrace School site. Having all of central services on one campus will allow for a better end-user experience for families and staff members. This model aligns with many other school district's central services operations.

### **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.

### **Early Childhood Centers**

Early childhood programs in MCPS are targeted to children and families affected by poverty, including children with disabilities, and provides them with additional time to acquire literacy, mathematics, and social/emotional skills for success in school and later learning in life. These programs provide

opportunities for children to build school-readiness skills by increasing social interactions, building oral language skills, and fostering vocabulary development. These programs are located yearly, based on need in the community and transportation travel times. This project provides funding for MCPS to further expand early childhood programs throughout the county.

### **Emergency Replacement of Major Building Components**

This project will provide funds for the emergency replacement of major building components throughout the school system. These funds will allow projects that are in other countywide systemic projects, such as HVAC Replacement, to maintain their schedules when emergency replacements arise.

### **Facility Planning**

In order to assure the availability of accurate cost estimates for facility construction, a feasibility study process is conducted for additions, new schools and Major Capital projects. An architect is hired 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. This "preplanning" information is 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. This project will provide funds for any necessary contractors involving boundary studies, alternative financing models, and other districtwide planning initiatives.

### **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.

### **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 revitalization/expansion.

### **Holding School Improvements**

This project provides upgrades like restroom renovations, roof/HVAC replacements, and installing modular buildings at our multiple holding schools. MCPS intends to increase the amount of holding schools in a future CIP.

### **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.

### **Major Capital Projects**

This project includes large-scale renovations of facilities, possibly including programmatic and capacity considerations. There are two master projects—Elementary Major Capital Projects and Secondary Major Capital Projects.

### **Materials Management Relocation**

This project would be used for the interior construction of a centralized warehouse space, specifically designed to meet the demands of serving the State's largest school system in a safe and efficient manner. The functions that would be incorporated into this one site would reduce delivery times and thousands of driving miles per year, save valuable operating resources, and reduce our carbon footprint.

### **Outdoor Play Space and Athletic Infrastructure**

This project provides funds for outdated playground equipment and surfaces, as well as aging athletic infrastructure such as field turf, bleachers, stadium lights, tennis courts, etc.

### **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.

### **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 provides 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.

### **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 addresses aspects of security throughout Montgomery County Public Schools that will serve to protect not only the student and community population, but also the extensive investment in educational facilities, equipment, and supplies in buildings. This project addresses security items such as technology upgrades to existing security systems, installation of new security systems, updating electronic school access, installing interior/exterior cameras, as well as other protective measures at various schools throughout the county.

## **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. In addition, 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.

## **Sustainability Initiatives**

Maryland State law (Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §5-312.1—School district energy policies) encourages school districts such as MCPS to set targets to reduce the school district's greenhouse gas emissions. This project will provide funds to improve energy and utility use efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve resiliency, and align with other sustainability priorities for MCPS. Initiatives will include: upgrades to building automation systems, building retrofits to improve energy efficiency, solar panel installations, renovating greenhouses, and support towards integrating sustainability features into academics.

## **Technology Modernization**

This project provides 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 and Regional Support Facilities**

MCPS has been requested to vacate the Shady Grove bus depot site. This project would fund two new facilities that will provide replacement parking for most of the affected buses, enhance regionalized transportation operations, as well as have support space that would align with our regional services model.