

## Fiscal Year 2020 Proposed General Fund Budget

Dear Mayor, Town Council, Residents and Business Owners,

The proposed FY20 operating and capital budget is \$3,370,544. This is a \$1,167,887 or 34.65% reduction over last year's \$4,538,431 budget. It should be noted that the FY19 budget included \$1,238,365 budgeted for road repairs.

The proposed FY20 budget increases the residential real property tax rates and by one and a half cents, from \$0.53 to \$0.545 per \$100 which includes \$0.03 of the total of assessed valuation for the Infrastructure Improvement Reserve to fund major infrastructure projects. This increase reduces the Town's reliance on funds remaining from the previous year to balance the budget, while maintaining a solid rainy-day fund in case of emergencies. Highlights of the budget include:

### **Infrastructure maintenance:**

**Street repaving:** A roadway condition survey identified four streets to be repaved in FY2020. This work will include curb, gutter and sidewalk work if necessary. A concrete bus pad will also be constructed. Funds from Highway User Revenue, and the Real Estate Tax Roadway Fund in the amount of \$224,800 will be used for this project.

**Public Works Building:** The Public Works Department building needs some repairs to increase its service life. Funding in the amount of \$5,000 has been included to fund the replacement of the soffit, gutters and possibly some fascia.

**Urban forestry:** To continue with proactive pruning, hazard tree removals and to fund the planting of new trees to maintain the Town's tree canopy coverage, the Urban Forestry account has been increased by \$10,000.

**Landscaping:** The grounds at the Town Hall and Town Center Facility need continuing maintenance to maintain the raingarden and to keep them looking presentable. Funding in the amount of \$2,000 has been added to support the maintenance of the raingarden and refurbish the plantings on the property.

**Town Hall:** Funding in the amount of \$8,000 has been added to replace the badly stained carpeting in Town Hall.

**Town Hall document preservation:** Town Hall is suffering from a lack of storage space for important maps and other documents. Funding in the amount of \$2,000 was included in the budget to begin to scan documents for electronic storage.

**Welcome signage:** The Quality of Life Committee recommended the installation of welcome signs at entrances to the town. The budget includes \$2,000 to be used toward the planning and design for the project.

**Administration:**

Staff reorganization: Two positions within the Administration Department will be reorganized during FY2020, at a cost of \$8,882. The Treasurer/Human Resources Manager will become the Treasurer/Benefits Manager. This will allow this employee to focus more attention on financial controls and to develop an asset management program, both to meet the requirements of the Government Accounting Standards Board. This position will no longer handle human resource administrative functions.

The Administrative Coordinator position will be elevated from paygrade G to an Assistant to the Town Manager position at paygrade J. This change will move the responsibility for billing for personal property tax to the Code Enforcement Department where it is similar to the administration of the business licenses. This change will allow this long-term employee a chance to advance in her responsibilities to assist with the administrative functions of the human resources program, and to focus on policy analysis and project tracking.

**Computer support:** The cost of our computer servicing provided by Peake is going up from \$18,000 to \$24,000. This figure was provided too late to be included in the draft budget but will be included in the Proposed Budget.

**Public Safety:**

**New officer hire:** This budget includes the hiring of an additional police officer, increasing the sworn officers in the department from 8 to 9. It is proposed to hire an experienced certified police officer mid-year, allowing the department to better cover the safety needs of the community and the department. A total cost of \$81,050 has been included in the budget to cover the salary for an employee to begin in January, uniforms and a vehicle for the new officer.

**Promotions:** Three police promotions are included in this budget; one sergeant will be promoted to lieutenant and two private first class officers will be promoted to corporal. The total cost of the promotions is \$11,500.

**Police vehicle replacement:** The cost of a replacement cruiser at \$44,200 has been included in this budget. This will be funded using funds carried over from previous years, fund balance. As there is no vehicle replacement fund for the Police Department, vehicles are replaced through the general fund. This cost includes all the necessary equipment to outfit the vehicle for use. This is the first police vehicle to be purchased through the Town's general fund budget since 2015. An older police vehicle will be retired from the fleet with this purchase.

**Code Enforcement:**

**Code Enforcement Director:** The proposed budget includes the \$12,000 cost of staffing at the leadership level of the department from a Code Enforcement Manager to the hiring of a Code Enforcement Department Director.

**In-house building permit issuance study:** Although the cost for participation was not available at this writing, the Town has set aside \$3,000 to participate in the study being conducted by the

City of College Park and others to move the permitting process from Prince George's County to the local jurisdictions.

**Public Works:**

**Tipping fees:** This line item covers the cost of solid waste disposal. It is being increased by \$6,000 as this line item has been underfunded for several years.

**Vehicle maintenance:** This line item covers the cost of maintenance for the Public Works fleet. It is being increased by \$15,000 to more realistically cover the cost of maintaining the fleet.

**Vehicle replacement:** Two public works vehicles will be replaced in FY20; truck #14, a 2012 Freightliner refuse/recycling vehicle and truck #2, a 2012 Ford F-350 crew cab pick-up truck. To sustain of the vehicle replacement fund, a scheduled amount of \$106,215 will be added to the fund in FY20.

**Employee Retention and Recruitment:**

Cost of living adjustment and merit increases: A 4% combined cost of living adjustment and merit increases depending on the annual performance evaluation score, are proposed.

**Attrition reserve:** Due to staff responsibilities and in some cases seniority, it is sometimes difficult for staff to use all their vacation leave time in the year it is earned. In order to restore vacation leave to allow for balances to accrue to 120 hours, a reserve fund is being established with \$6,000 to cover the cost of payouts of vacation through attrition.

**Public Hearings:** Residents are encouraged to participate in the budget process at the public hearings held during the Town Meetings on April 10th and May 8th at 7:00 p.m. and watch the video live stream from [BerwynHeightsMD.gov](http://BerwynHeightsMD.gov).

Respectfully,

Maria T. Broadbent  
Town Manager