

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 1604

(Delegate Carr, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Budget and Taxation

Department of Natural Resources - Community Parks and Playgrounds
Program

This bill codifies and amends the existing Community Parks and Playgrounds Program within the Department of Natural Resources to provide flexible grants to municipalities and Baltimore City to • rehabilitate, expand, improve, or maintain existing parks; • purchase land to create new parks; • develop new parks; • purchase and install playground equipment in urban neighborhoods and rural areas throughout the State; or • be used for environmentally oriented parks and recreation projects. Program Open Space is to administer the program, which may be funded with general funds and with the proceeds from the sale of State general obligation bonds. It is the intent of the General Assembly that, to the extent funds are available, the Governor provide funding for the program. The bill's changes apply beginning in fiscal 2010.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: No overall impact on State finances. The FY 2009 capital budget includes \$5.0 million in GO bonds for the program, and the 2008 *Capital Improvement Program* indicates that \$5.0 million will be provided annually for the program from FY 2010 through 2013. Although the bill also authorizes general funds to be used for the program, it is assumed that it would be funded with GO bonds for the foreseeable future.

Local Effect: The overall funding provided to local governments would not change. However, beginning in FY 2010, funding under the program would be limited to municipalities and Baltimore City. Under the existing program, funding is also provided to counties. Accordingly, municipalities stand to benefit from the bill's changes, while counties stand to be negatively affected.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: **Current Law/Background:** Although not established in statute, a Community Parks and Playgrounds Program has been administered by POS since fiscal 2002. The program provides funding for the restoration of existing parks and the creation of new parks and green spaces in priority funding areas. The program provides flexible grants to local governments to assist in • rehabilitating, expanding, or improving existing parks; • creating new parks; or • purchasing and installing playground equipment. While land acquisition costs are considered, highest priority is given to capital costs associated with park and playground development and improvement.

The fiscal 2009 capital budget includes \$5.0 million in GO bonds for the program to fund 44 projects in 20 jurisdictions. The program's fiscal 2009 authorization is level with the fiscal 2008 authorization, and the 2008 *Capital Improvement Program* indicates that \$5.0 million will be provided annually for this program from fiscal 2010 through 2013.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 1000 (Senator Harrington) – Budget and Taxation.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Maryland State Treasurer's Office, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 14, 2008
ncs/lgc Revised - House Third Reader - March 26, 2008
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