

## *Carroll Creek Park Overview*

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Alderman David Koontz  
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### **WHAT IS CARROLL CREEK PARK?**

Carroll Creek Park is a world-class, mixed-use urban park spanning 1.3 miles through the heart of historic Downtown Frederick, Maryland. An engineering marvel, the park is designed to rest on top of massive box concrete culverts that form the flood control project. Like a zipper, the park ties the northern and southern banks of Carroll Creek and downtown together.

Spanning five City administrations and 30 years, the project is nearing fruition as the City completed construction of the first major phase of the multi million dollar public linear park. The development community is well underway to construct over \$150 million in new or renovated office, retail, and residential facilities adjacent to the park. When complete, more than 580,000 sf of new or renovated office/commercial space is planned and 300 residential units are planned. It is estimated that the project will create more than 1,500 new jobs and add over \$2.5 million in annual local property taxes.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **□ Floods**

Downtown Frederick was devastated by Carroll Creek flooding in both 1972 and the historic flood of 1976. With millions in property losses, several dozen buildings were left vacant or underutilized.

### **□ Flood Control**

Following the floods, the City, with the assistance of Rummel, Klepper and Kahl (RK&K) undertook extensive hydrologic studies of the Carroll Creek watershed to determine the extent of the problem. The results served as the basis for all future flood-related planning in downtown Frederick. The use of Baker Park to hold flood waters was introduced. As well, various concepts for development of an open flood control channel through downtown were floated; ultimately the closed conduit design was approved in 1983. This closed cell design allowed for a more narrow ribbon of ROW to be acquired, was more aesthetically pleasing and allowed for park development and adjacent development to occur – a critical component of the plan. In 1983, conduit construction began and completed 10 years later. The \$60 million project was financed by the City (34%), County (21%), and State (45%).

### **□ The Park Master Plan**

The Carroll Creek Commission began planning for Carroll Creek Park as construction started on the flood control project. Design work for a park master plan was initiated under the capable hands of Jacobson Wallace Associates (JWA).

In 1991, the City enthusiastically adopted the final Carroll Creek Master Plan - an exciting vision for the development of Carroll Creek Park, which is still used today. Led by the Carroll Creek Commission, JWA crafted an overall design for a creekside park through historic downtown Frederick. The park plan called for commercial, residential, cultural, and recreational development. A core part of the plan was to attract new infill development into downtown.

### **□ Additional Infrastructure Development**

During the 12 years between 1991 and 2003, a number of critical projects were undertaken.

- Minor Park improvements were installed between Baker Park & Court St
- East Street was extended from E. Patrick to E. South Street across Carroll Creek—opening up a multitude of development sites (\$5 million)
- The State of Maryland extended commuter rail service (MARC) into downtown along Carroll Creek and East Street (\$25 million)
- Frederick County expanded the C. Burr Artz Library (\$12 million)
- The City has completed a 4<sup>th</sup> parking deck with 650 additional spaces, adjacent to the Court House along Carroll Creek.
- The City funded and adopted an East Street Corridor Plan (The Design Collective, Inc - \$68,000)

□ **Park Development & Construction**

Beginning in 2003 there was much activity to propel the now long awaited park project toward completion:

- ❖ The City appointed an ad-hoc Carroll Creek Task Force representing downtown businesses, residents, and city staff.
- ❖ The final FEMA map amendment was approved, removing much of downtown Frederick from the 100 Year Floodplain.
- ❖ The City and County adopted Brownfields Tax Credit Legislation
- ❖ In June, 2003 the elected officials gave financial approval to begin the final schematic design for the park from Baker Park to Highland Street (\$366,300 – 70% City, 30% State Grant). The City retained HNTB Corporation and RK&K Engineers for design services.
- ❖ Through 2004, construction documents and specifications were developed for the first phase of construction (\$990,000 – 27% City, 73% State Grant). Some elements of the final design included:
  - ✦ *Handicap accessible crosswalks at all street crossings*
  - ✦ *Pedestrian and Bicycle paths*
  - ✦ *Landscaped planters with grass, shrubs, and shade trees*
  - ✦ *Water features*
  - ✦ *3 – Bridges (stone arch, cable-stay suspension, and iron)*
  - ✦ *350-person amphitheatre*
  - ✦ *80' long Trellis*
  - ✦ *Custom Lighting*
  - ✦ *Benches, Trash Receptacles, Bike Racks*
  - ✦ *½ mile boating from S. Market Street to E. Patrick Street*

□ **Construction**

- ❖ In February, 2005, the City awarded a \$10.2 million construction contract to Morgan-Keller, Inc. Construction officially began in April 2005 and was completed in June of 2006. Total construction costs were \$10.7 million.
- ❖ In 2006 Carroll Creek Park was designated a Maryland Priority Place by the Governor.
- ❖ In 2006 the HNTB contract was amended by the Mayor and Board for continuity of design services for the next phase(\$1.49 million).
- ❖ In 2007 The City of Frederick applied for and has been awarded a \$3.0 million Maryland Transportation Enhancement Grant to assist with the construction costs of the next phase.
- ❖ It is anticipated the second phase of construction will begin in early 2008.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It has been anticipated that private capital investment in new and renovated buildings along Carroll Creek will help offset the more than \$135 million in public investment in downtown over the last 25 years.

When complete, it is anticipated that the Carroll Creek Park Project will produce 430,000 sf of office space, 150,000 sf of retail space, 300 residential units and 2,200 structured parking spaces. This is expected to generate more than \$2.5 million in City and County property tax revenue annually, and more than 1,500 new jobs (not including retail jobs).

### Completed Private Projects

The following 4 new construction projects have been development along Carroll Creek Park. These mixed-use projects represent more than \$30 million in investment and will provide 78 new housing units, 73,000 sf of Class-A office space, 37,000 sf of commercial (retail) space and 225 new parking spaces. More than 300 new jobs are anticipated.

Site	Project Name	Capital Investment (millions)*	Office SF	Commercial & Retail SF	Housing Units	Parking
Site A1	Creekside Plaza	\$12.0	45,000	15,000	11	
Site A2	La Paz	\$2.0		8,000		
Site B	South Market Center	\$7.0	28,000	14,000		25
Site C1	Maxwell Place	\$12.0			67	200
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$33.0</b>	<b>73,000 sf</b>	<b>37,000sf</b>	<b>78 du</b>	<b>225</b>

*\*Estimates by Developer*

Assuming that the assessed value of the properties mentioned above were to total the estimated capital investment of \$33.0 million, this would translate into estimated annual property taxes of:

City =	\$221,100	(@ 0.67 cents per hundred value)
County =	\$317,790	(@ \$.963 dollar per hundred value)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$538,890</b>	<b>annual estimated local property tax payments</b>

In addition would be the income taxes paid from the jobs created, sales tax from the retail enterprises, and the fees from permits, excise taxes and impact fees.

**PROPOSED and APPROVED FUTURE PROJECTS**

There are another 14 known proposed private projects or future development along Carroll Creek Park that are in various stages of design and approvals. Many are mixed-use projects representing more than \$124 million in investment and will provide 222 new housing units, 332,000 sf of Class-A office space, 113,000 sf of commercial (retail) space and 1,300 new parking spaces. Another 1,000 new jobs are anticipated to be created (not including retail jobs).

Assuming that the assessed value of the properties mentioned above were to total the estimated capital investment of \$124.0 million, this would translate into estimated annual property taxes of:

City =	\$ 830,800	(@ 0.67 cents per hundred value)
County =	\$1,194,120	(@ \$.963 dollar per hundred value)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,024,920</b>	<b>annual estimated local property tax payments</b>

In addition would be the income taxes paid from the jobs created, sales tax from the retail enterprises, and the fees from permits, excise taxes and impact fees.

**SUMMARY OF SELECTED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS**

**ESTIMATED JOBS: 1,500 new jobs (not including retail jobs)**

**ESTIMATED CITY PROPERTY TAXES: \$1,051,900 annually**

**ESTIMATED COUNTY PROPERTY TAXES: \$1,511,910 annually**

**TOTAL \$2,563,810 annually**