

Explanatory Statement

The volunteer Charter Commission recommended amending the City Charter to update the City's authority to protect and manage parks and to manage sewers and stormwaters. Descriptions of the City's roles were last updated in 1966.

Currently, the City's role to protect and manage parks is described in Charter Section 12-101.

Under the Commission's recommendation, Charter Section 12-101 would be amended to define "recreational and natural areas" as parks, playgrounds, forests, wetlands and human-built or natural facilities. The remaining language would be streamlined to increase readability.

Currently, the City's sewer and stormwater management role is described in Charter Section 11-301 and Section 11-302 describes the City's process, last amended in 1970, to fix, collect and deposit service charges into the Sewage Disposal Fund.

Under the Commission's recommendation, a new section would be added to the City's specific powers in Charter Section 2-105(a) to clarify that the City may perform sewer and stormwater management – including protecting, restoring, remediating, altering, improving, expanding, filling, grading, or managing flow – in channels, riparian areas, floodplains, waterfronts, lakes, ponds, wetlands and other waters, natural systems or constructed equivalents. Existing Charter Section 11-301 would be amended to clarify that storm drainage may include the use of natural systems or constructed equivalents. Existing Charter Section 11-302 would be amended to streamline language related to service charges. The Charter will continue to require City Council to spend all charges deposited into the Sewage Disposal Fund on uses "reasonably related" to sewage and stormwater conveyance, disposal and purification.