

From: [Clara A. Scholl](#)
To: [Budget Testimony](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Budget testimony - compost in Howard County
Date: Wednesday, December 21, 2022 3:04:34 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Executive and Councilmembers,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the upcoming Howard County Budget. I am a Howard County resident in zip code 21046. I am reaching out to advocate for project "C0299-phase three of composting facilities" specifically with regards to expansion of municipal compost facilities and services in Howard County.

As a Howard County resident and proponent of strong public health and sustainable development policy, I believe that municipal composting is essential for our County's future as a core component of the waste management triad along with waste and recycling management, and that expansion of municipal compost facilities and services should be emphasized and fully funded in the upcoming budget.

Equitable access to municipal composting is a security concern. Sustainable energy and waste management practices will be critical for ensuring our security in upcoming decades as geopolitical tensions and climate change will require adoption of sustainable practices in our local communities. We will not be able to rely on exporting our trash from the state indefinitely. Diverting the compostable fraction of waste away from landfill and into municipal compost is a key step toward managing this reality.

Howard County was ahead of the times when it launched the Feed the Green Bin pilot program back in 2010. Unfortunately, 12 years later, the program is available in just 7 of the 15 collection area zones, and the county has fallen far beyond our peer counties in terms of equitable access to municipal compost services. Prince George's County recently expanded its municipal compost program to pick up compost from all PG county residents receiving PG County-contracted trash and recycling services. Arlington County, Virginia similarly now offers municipal compost services to all county residents receiving trash and recycling services. It is time to bring Howard County up to speed with our neighbors and expedite the development of facilities necessary to offer municipal compost services to all Howard County residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

V/R

Clara A. Scholl

443-765-2170

clara.scholl@gmail.com

9702 Deep Smoke
Columbia MD 21046

From: manager.owenbrownvillage.org
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [Budget Testimony](#)
Cc: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: FY24 County Budget Testimony
Date: Thursday, February 9, 2023 10:19:32 AM
Attachments: [FY24 County Budget Input .pdf](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Executive Ball,

Please see attached letter from the Owen Brown Village Board.

Thank you,

Craig Barton

Village Manager

Owen Brown Community Association, Inc.

6800 Cradlerock Way

Columbia, MD 21045

T 410.381.0202

F 410.381.0235

www.owenbrownvillage.org



OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC
6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, Maryland 21045-4809
Phone 410-381-0202 Fax 410-381-0235
WEB Page: www.owenbrownvillage.org

February 9, 2023

The Honorable Dr. Calvin Ball
Howard County Maryland
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Subject: **Howard County FY24 Budget**

Dear Executive Ball,

The Owen Brown Village Board respectfully submits the following input for your consideration and incorporation in ongoing county budget deliberations. We believe the following issues are of particular interest to the over 10,000 residents of Owen Brown:

1. Funding to continue police gator/bike/horse patrols on our pathways throughout Columbia.
2. Funding for programs that combat stream erosion in the Lake Elkhorn watershed as well as address environmental degradation.
3. Funding for tree replacement along residential roads and parkways.
4. Funding for street repairs, renovations, and upgrades; particularly the complete streets projects planned for Dobbin Road and Robert Fulton.
5. Funding the police community liaison program for Owen Brown.
6. We support the East Columbia Library Athletic Fields and Site Improvements for \$5.3M in FY-2024 (N3973-2014).
7. We support the request for \$200K to begin a feasibility study for a park on Oakland Mills Road just north of Homespun which used to be set aside as a school site (N3980-2014). We would also like to ensure our community is consulted on this project.

Additionally, we would like to thank you for helping secure the funding for the complete streets project recently completed along much of Oakland Mills Road.

Thank you for your service to the community and for considering our input.

Sincerely,
Owen Brown Village Board

Cc: Howard County Council

Respass, Charity

From: Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 1:02 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget testimony for Howard EcoWorks
Attachments: EcoWorksTestimonies_FY24.pdf

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good afternoon County Council,

I am not able to attend the upcoming budget sessions due to a needed break but would like to send in our formal testimony.

My name is Lori Lilly and I am the Executive Director of Howard EcoWorks. EcoWorks engages and educates the community about environmental sustainability and restoration, while creating pathways to green jobs through our workforce development programs. I founded and launched EcoWorks in July, 2017 – over the past 5 years, we have grown tremendously, offering a diversity of programming and services while also diversifying and growing revenue to support overall organizational sustainability. The pandemic, as difficult as it was in so many ways, was a catalyst for our social enterprise business model that will provide long-term benefits to the health of our organization.

The partnership with Howard County Government predates EcoWorks back to 2012 with an initial commitment from the County to the READY program, Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth, through a 500k/year grant to the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay to administer the program. This initial investment was for a summer-only program for young adults age 16-25 to install rain gardens around the County with the goal of building creditable MS4 projects while also educating the community and generating public support for the stormwater utility fee through a green jobs type model. This initial model has blossomed and been cultivated into multi-faceted year-round programming and service provision for the County Government and community. For example, we work at the forefront of innovation with the Seeds of Change program at the Corrections Department where, in 2022, in-mate labor at our on-site native plant nursery supported 30 prisoner days avoided in the jail. Seeds of Change is a low cost, high return on investment program that demonstrates how we are able to effectively leverage limited resources to positively impact individuals and the County Government itself.

Our project work has broadened beyond just rain gardens to include much more focus on tree planting, which is a more cost effective stormwater management solution that offers additional co-benefits such as cooling, supporting pollinators and sequestering carbon. We have also broadened our work to include various types of maintenance, inclusive of both our own projects and County projects, natural infrastructure assets, namely our forests, and stormwater drainage infrastructure management such as the work that we perform for the County's Safe and Sound Plan. In fact there was a Safe and Sound event called last week, the 14th event since the program started. We have successfully implemented our responsibilities in every one of those 14 weather events – even though each event requires us to drop what we are doing at the moment and respond within 3 days, we consider it an honor to support the County and community in such an important way.

Central to all we do is the community – on a daily basis we are in neighborhoods, on church property, on the streets and in the streams. We educate our teams, the neighbors, our clients, the public. For the past two years, we have focused resources and investments into urban under-served areas with our tree planting – we planted 300 trees in these areas just this past fall. It is critical that we bring resources to these areas that are the most vulnerable to the threats of climate change. Going forward, we see EcoWorks as being a vital partner to implement the County's Climate Action Plan through the construction and maintenance of nature-based solutions in under-served communities with our green jobs programs. We will recruit for our workforce in these same communities so that we can generate economies of scale that benefit individuals, communities and our environment. We think that we are one of your best allies and partners with our proven ability to respond to the hazards and emergencies associated with weather events while also leading in mitigation of the climate emergency.

We are requesting that our budget for FY24 be supported at 450k. We have demonstrated our effectiveness, impact and return on investment over the past 10 years and especially the past 5 years through EcoWorks' innovative programming. We ask for your support as we, like many others, struggle with the labor market and demand for ever-increasing wages while we continue to provide the best service that we can to Howard County Government and our community. Thank you for your consideration. Please see attached for testimonies that were submitted on our behalf to the County Executive.

Sincerely,

Lori

--

Lori Lilly, CEP, CBLP

Founder & Executive Director

443-518-7666 (o)

443-936-8805 (c)

Check out the EcoWorks promotional video! https://youtu.be/brN_QSVaf1A

<http://www.howardecoworks.org/>



Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>

Fwd: Budget testimony, March residents

1 message

Amity Tripp <amity.tripp@gmail.com>
To: Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>

Tue, Mar 14, 2023 at 5:16 PM

SO SORRY it was so late. I had this on my calendar for last week and really thought I had done it. Til you mentioned it today. I hope they still accept it. But here it is for next month.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Amity Tripp** <amity.tripp@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 14, 2023 at 5:14 PM
Subject: Budget testimony, March residents
To: <budgettestimony@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: <djung@howardcountymd.gov>, msrichmond@howardcountymd.gov <msrichmond@howardcountymd.gov>, Feldmark, Joshua <jofeldmark@howardcountymd.gov>, mdeluca@howardcountymd.gov <mdeluca@howardcountymd.gov>, jseefried@howardcountymd.gov <jseefried@howardcountymd.gov>, Cabellon, Angela <acabellon@howardcountymd.gov>

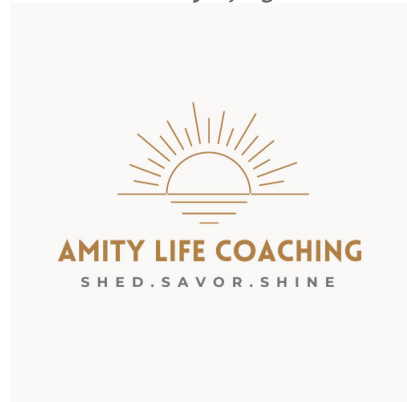
Dear County Executive Ball,

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of Howard EcoWorks' FY24 budget request of \$500,000 to Howard County Government. As a Board Member, and resident of District 4, I have witnessed first hand EcoWorks' impact in our community. Through tireless efforts such as but not limited to the following, EcoWorks is a foundation of support to our environmental strength and sustainability in Howard County:

- maintenance of public infrastructure,
- leadership for achieving environmental sustainability,
- rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept
- focus on equity and inclusion
- administration of green jobs programming,
- support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan

These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development. Thank you very much for your consideration of this request and support of Howard EcoWorks.

--
Amity Tripp
7094 Garden Walk, Columbia, 21044
Life Coach
www.amitylifecoaching.com
"Don't let a busy life get in the way of living a beautiful life!" -nks





Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>

County Executive Budget Hearing - Request for support

Hank Stanton <hstanton@brightportms.com>
To: Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>

Mon, Mar 6, 2023 at 12:42 PM

Lori:

I submitted my testimony adding a few lines:

Dear County Executive Ball,

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of Howard EcoWorks' FY24 budget request of \$500,000 to Howard County Government. Howard EcoWorks has a high impact in our community through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept and focus on equity and inclusion. These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development. Thank you very much for your consideration of this request and support of Howard EcoWorks.

I am a huge fan and supporter of the work EcoWorks is doing for the county. As President of Tollhouse Condominium Association, I worked directly with Lori Lilly and her team of implementers. The installation they completed offered a significant improvement to our grounds in a manner that was aesthetically pleasing and environmentally responsible. Ecoworks solved a chronic rainwater and drainage management problem that had been plaguing us for years by planting and managing natural systems. It could not have been more successful.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Henry G. Stanton
BrightPort Managed Solutions
443-472-3887

Dear County Executive Ball,

I am writing in support of Howard EcoWorks' FY24 budget request of \$500,000 to the Howard County Government. Howard EcoWorks has been an on-the-ground supporter of green jobs, community programming and educational opportunities, as well as a valued, trusted organization for engaging with the community and the ecosystem.

As the administrator of a large online gardening community, I have seen the time, research, and effort put in by Howard EcoWorks' staff members in support of the eco-friendly community here in Howard County. From assisting with a number of seed swaps, creating pollinator gardens, providing affordable native plants through their nursery in Jessup and just answering questions, they've made an enormous effort to say "yes" when they are able to help.

They recently participated in a biochar burn at our religious community, educating close to 75 people over two weeks in how to produce biochar and how it can help our environment and useful applications. This also resulted in turning a very large debris pile into a usable supplement for our gardening and landscaping applications. Their staff members give up their own time outside of office hours to make our community a better and more ecofriendly place.

I have seen for years now how Howard EcoWorks gets out of the office into the community and makes a powerful difference, on an approachable, affordable, and welcoming level. They are making true changes for the better in our area and I support their budget request.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Julie Danna



Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>

Howard EcoWorks Budget Testimony

Kimberly Ben <kben@howardecoworks.org>

Tue, Mar 7, 2023 at 1:59 PM

To: budgettestimony@howardcountymd.gov

Cc: jofeldmark@howardcountymd.gov, msrichmond@howardcountymd.gov, mdeluca@howardcountymd.gov,

acabellon@howardcountymd.gov, jseefried@howardcountymd.gov, council4@baltimorecountymd.gov

Bcc: llilly@howardecoworks.org

Dear County Executive Ball,

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of Howard EcoWorks' FY24 budget request of \$500,000 to Howard County Government. Howard EcoWorks has a high impact in our community through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept and focus on equity and inclusion. These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local

natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development. Thank you very much for your consideration of this request and support of Howard EcoWorks.

--

Kimberly Ben

Communications and Outreach Coordinator, Howard EcoWorks

www.howardecoworks.org



Lori Lilly <lilly@howardecoworks.org>

Fwd: Howard County Budget Testimony Signup

2 messages

Guy Moody <moodys@comcast.net>

Sun, Mar 12, 2023 at 6:31 PM

To: "lilly@howardecoworks.org" <lilly@howardecoworks.org>

Cc: Cynthia Marshall <cynthia@actioninmontgomery.org>

Hi Lori,

Below is the written testimony I submitted on behalf of Howard EcoWorks, as requested. I hope it helps and keep up the great work!

Guy

----- Original Message -----

From: "no-reply@howardcountymd.gov" <no-reply@howardcountymd.gov>

To: "moodys@comcast.net" <moodys@comcast.net>

Date: 03/12/2023 6:22 PM

Subject: Howard County Budget Testimony Signup

Dear Guy Moody,

You have been registered for the March Residents' Budget Hearing, scheduled for 6 PM on March 13, 2023.

On the day of the public hearing, you can participate virtually in order to view the hearing or give testimony by accessing the following link:

WebEx Link: [Constituents Link](#)

WebEx Meeting Id: 2303 079 9879

Password: password

Session: March Residents' Budget Hearing

Date: 3/13/2023 6:00:00 PM

Organization: People Acting Together in Howard (PATH)

Testimony Statement: Dear County Executive Ball, I am writing this letter of support on behalf of Howard EcoWorks' FY24 budget request of \$500,000 to Howard County Government. I am writing both as a longtime leader in People Acting Together in Howard (PATH), and as a 45-year resident of Columbia—one who is deeply passionate about the environment and investing in young adults and youth in our community. Full disclosure: I was a leader in establishing the READY (Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth) Program, in 2012 under then County Executive, Ken Ulman, which grew into EcoWorks. This level of involvement gave me the opportunity to see up-close the meaningful work this amazing program could do around both of these passions. EcoWorks provides tangible environmental work in its storm water remediation, restoration of natural environment projects. Just to provide two examples, EcoWorks fills an important niche in building rain gardens throughout the county and in taking out invasive species, replacing them with native species. At the same time, EcoWorks provides meaningful living-wage jobs for young adults and youth that they would not get otherwise. Many of these young people need this work to be able to afford college. Have witnessed a diverse workforce, pulling together as a team, learning valuable skills of collaboration, teamwork, and understanding. All the while, their work literally improves the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries while also slowing erosion to our streams, rivers, and surrounding property. They help prevent costly flooding to homes and communities in the county. These are reasons enough to invest county funds in EcoWorks, but there is so much more that this organization does. It educates its workforce around the importance of its work for fighting the myriad problems attacking the health of our Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The workforce, through their projects and their work as community ambassadors, educate county residents about the much-needed work they do. Because of this program, I have two rain gardens on my property, which have played a major role in preventing my basement from flooding—after multiple prior floods. Finally, EcoWorks changes young lives. I personally have witnessed young people, who had little knowledge of the effects of storm water become experts, ready

and eager to educate others to its devastating effects. I have seen youth decide to major in Environmental Science because of the work they have done. I've seen young people tap into inner resources they didn't know they had, gaining in confidence and becoming stronger all because of the work they've done with EcoWorks. In sum, Howard EcoWorks has a high impact in our community through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept and focus on equity and inclusion. These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development. Thank you very much for your consideration of this request and support of Howard EcoWorks.

Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>
To: Guy Moody <moodys@comcast.net>

Mon, Mar 13, 2023 at 8:04 AM

Thank you so much Guy!!

--

Lori Lilly, CEP, CBLP
Executive Director, Howard EcoWorks

443-518-7666 (o)

443-936-8805 (c)

Check out the EcoWorks promotional video! https://youtu.be/brN_QSVAf1A

<http://www.howardecoworks.org/>

[Quoted text hidden]



HERITAGE GREENWAY P. O. Box 96, Ellicott City, Maryland 21041 | info@patapsco.org | www.patapsco.org

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Honorable Members of the County Council:

On behalf of Patapsco Heritage Greenway, where I serve as board president, I am pleased to submit the following testimony. PHG is proud of the positive contributions we make to the health and well-being of residents while helping steward the historical, natural, cultural and recreational resources of Howard County. Thanks to the support provided by Howard County Government over the last four years, PHG, as the non-profit managing entity of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA), has been able to effectively carry out its mission of preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring the environment, history and culture of the river valley.

We respectfully ask that you support the \$80,000 in FY24 funding for our organization in the county operating budget. The success of Maryland Heritage Areas depends on support from local governments, which, in turn, benefit from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) program through access to additional grants, free educational programs, stewardship activities, and heritage tourism. We also grew our volunteer force during the year, expanded our water quality monitoring program, removed over 10,000 pounds of trash during stream clean-ups, planted additional trees, conducted invasive removal events, and offered a range of free environmental education and history programs.

The return on Howard County's investment in the PVHA is high. Some recent highlights include:

- Over \$180,000 in funding for partner organizations within Howard County during the last two years, which includes \$40,000 distributed through our state-supported PHG mini-grant and sponsorship programs.
- With an executive director, environmental program manager, heritage program coordinator, community programs coordinator, and water quality program coordinator, our staff's experience and expertise marks us as unique among the state's 13 heritage area management entities, allowing us to effectively and efficiently leverage state, county and private funding to work with and support partners in a diverse range of activities.
- Increased engagement with Howard County's Spanish-speaking community, including partnering with Maryland DNR's *Es Mi Parque* initiative and Defensores de la Cuenca for educational events at the Avalon area in Patapsco Valley State Park, which we are expanding in the coming year.

PATAPSCO HERITAGE GREENWAY is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working to preserve, protect, interpret, & restore the environment, history, and culture of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.

- Producing a 16-minute documentary, *Pioneering Along the Patapsco*, in partnership with Maryland Public Television and EC250 that premiered as part of the EC250 events. The film is available to the public via our website and YouTube channel, fostering greater awareness of the historical and environmental significance of the PVHA.
- Expanding youth engagement through multiple “Day of Service” events with Girl Scouts of Central Maryland-Howard County Cluster and creating stewardship and educational events in partnership with Rotary Clubs of Howard County.

We recognize the importance of promoting heritage tourism and supporting local organizations, which is highlighted in our social media campaigns and reflected in our new website at patapsco.org. We also completed a new five year strategic plan that will bring an increased vitality to our heritage tourism activities, enhancing the visitor experience and driving interest in local businesses. This effort involves a continued emphasis on interpreting and exploring a truly inclusive history of the region that values the contributions of all. This is vital in encouraging people to live, work and play in Howard County.

We promise to always strive to provide Howard County a valuable return on the investment it makes in PHG and to serve the needs of this community. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Southerland

Mark Southerland, PhD
President

From: [Chiara D'Amore](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Cc: [Jean Silver-Isenstadt](#)
Subject: submission of testimony and support letters for the Community Ecology Institute
Date: Thursday, May 11, 2023 9:33:26 AM
Attachments: [HoCoBudetTestimony_5-8-23_CEIFinal.docx](#)
[2023 County Budget Testimony Support CEI.pdf](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good morning, Howard County Council Members.

Thank you for the opportunity testify on Monday evening on behalf of the retention of the proposed operating grant funds for the Community Ecology Institute in the County's FY24 budget.

Attached please provide the testimony I read as well as a letter of support signed by 168 community members, many of which include powerful testimony as well.

Thank you for the essential work you do on behalf of our community.

Chiara

[Chiara D'Amore](#), Ph.D.

(she/her/hers)

Executive Director

[The Community Ecology Institute](#)

*Please note, I often work in the field and am away from my computer at those times. Non-urgent emails may take several business days for a response. If your need is urgent, please contact me at 443-832-3824.

[Be an "evergreen" giver in CEI's operational support campaign!](#)

CEI humbly acknowledges the Indigenous people who were wrongfully removed from their ancestral lands where we live and work today. We offer our deepest respect to the [Piscataway Conoy Tribe](#), and all other tribes Indigenous to the central Maryland region where our organization is based. To learn more about the Indigenous people where you live, visit [Native-Land.ca](#).



Community Ecology Institute

May 8, 2023

Good evening County Council Members,

My name is Chiara D'Amore and I am the founder and Executive Director of the Community Ecology Institute. It is our mission to cultivate communities where people and nature thrive together by working towards tangible, community-level change at the many intersections of environment, education, equity and health. We are very grateful for the County Executive's inclusion of resources for CEI in the proposed FY24 county operating budget.

As you know, in 2019 CEI was able to purchase the last working farm in Columbia to protect it from housing development and transform it into an accessible, experiential education center where people learn from hands-on experience about how they can lead happier, healthier, more connected and sustainable lives. During the incredible difficulties of Covid, CEI transformed this property into a unique and vibrant place of common ground for diverse members of our community. Last year, when the Green Farmacy Garden in Fulton was put on the market, CEI was able once again to respond to community encouragement and protect a vulnerable environmental and cultural asset with support from the county and state. As stewards of a combined 12 acres of unique outdoor education space in the county and now with a newly renovated Community Engagement Center at Freetown Farm, CEI is focused on aligning our services with our expanded capacity.

In 2022, we engaged more than 2,400 people in meaningful ways: as participants in our four core educational programs, as attendees of our innovative workshops, through our service-learning initiative, and through the direct provision of plants and produce. We are able to engage an audience reflective of Howard County's diversity through our strong partnerships and collaborations. This is a purposeful priority for CEI because mutually supportive relationships are foundational to community health and illustrated everywhere in natural systems. We have over two dozen active collaborations with organizations throughout the community. For example, the NAACP, HopeWorks, and the Third all have a robust presence at Freetown Farm, stewarding dedicated plots of land that benefit their memberships and missions. Columbia Community Care, Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center, and Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services are all direct beneficiaries of the food grown at Freetown Farm. Students from the Howard County Public School System and Howard Community College regularly participate in our internship program. We partner with Howard EcoWorks, the Columbia Association, and the Watershed Stewards Academy on environmental stewardship initiatives. And the list goes on because we are truly stronger together.



Community Ecology Institute

Through our intergenerational experiential education initiatives, CEI is working in direct alignment with the county's commitment to bold solutions backed by science to sustain our natural resources and combat climate change, all while enhancing the health of the people who call Howard County home. The following are a few specific highlights of how CEI's work is aligned with the county's new Climate Action and Resilience Plan.

1. We are stewarding Freetown Farm to demonstrate nature-based actions connected to the County's commitment to the US Climate Alliance's Natural and Working Lands Challenge. We have more than a dozen different demonstration areas of nature-based actions already installed and more on the horizon at the Green Pharmacy Garden, Atholton High School and beyond.
2. We offer experiential education programs for people across the life-span, young children and their caregivers to people in their 80s and beyond. For example, our CFIN program helps families grow familiarity with and joy in protecting nearby natural environments. Our Roots & Wings Learning Community provides elementary and middle school aged students with an education literally rooted in the large Youth Garden at the farm. Our Green SEEDS Internship Program supports high school and college students with in-depth exploration of their mission aligned interests.
3. Our Nourishing Gardens program transforms lawns into ecologically beneficial food growing gardens planted where people live, learn, work and play. Last year we installed 31 Nourishing Gardens in public spaces in Howard County, mostly Title 1 schools.
4. CEI provides a safe and welcoming place for community engagement for over a thousand volunteers – individuals, families, community groups, businesses, scouts and more find value in engaging with CEI in unique service learning opportunities that have an emphasis on growing healthy food using regenerative agricultural practices. Together we have grown tens of thousands of pounds of food for the community, donating much of it to those in need.

CEI is demonstrating how local nature-based experiential education centers can provide physical and mental health benefits to community members while simultaneously developing knowledge and skills that support personal, family, community, and ecosystem resilience. The physical health opportunities of being active on a farm may be fairly obvious, and they are substantial. But the mental health benefits are perhaps even more immediate and significant. To paraphrase a community leader that is a regular volunteer at Freetown Farm, "I come here for the food and exercise, but my main reason is for the mental health benefits. This is where I go to relax and reconnect so I can go back to my work recharged." This is a common refrain.

Our work is impactful at the personal level and at the community level. In 2022 we received a Rise to the Challenge award for non-profit innovation in the face of Covid from the County and a Cornerstone Award from the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources for our innovative work around community stormwater management. We were also featured on the NBC Today Show and



Community Ecology Institute

highlighted as one of their best stories of the year. Just this April we received a Howard County Green Community Leader Award for our Nourishing Gardens program.

On behalf of CEI and the community we serve, I respectfully request that the county council votes to support CEI in the 2024 operational budget at the proposed funding levels. Since the budget process began, county leadership has received dozens of letters of support for CEI and with this testimony we will be submitting a letter of support signed by more than 100 people. We hope that our collective voices convey the value of continuing to invest in CEI's unique role in Howard County.

Thank you very much.

2023 County Budget Testimony Support



	Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
1	Chiara D'Amore	Columbia	It has been an honor to partner with the County and the community in creating the Community Ecology Institute. Seeing the impact this organization has been able to have on so many diverse people during such difficult times has been incredible. I have more remarkable moments to share than time or space, but at this moment in time, I truly think our positive impact on mental health and engaging people on climate action and other environmental issues rises to the top of the intersectional benefits CEI brings to Howard County.
2	Charlie Goedeke	Laurel	
3	Patrick Curtis	Bethesda	
4	Christy Ferguson	Columbia	
5	Jean Silver-Isenstadt	Laurel	
6	Regina Tassone	Baltimore	With the support of Howard County Government, CEI has purchased and taken over operation of The Green Farmacy Garden, where I work. Other potential purchasers had mostly personal or corporate interests in mind and I'm so grateful for the state and county support that allowed this mission-aligned, community-oriented organization to steward this amazing unique resource.
7	Erica Coady	Columbia	CEI provides a space for the community to come together and appreciate the natural world together, build relationships with their neighbors, and learn new skills. I love how welcoming it feels to visit the farm and to participate in the collective vision to build a more sustainable and healthy community.
8	Loni Cohen	COLUMBIA	The Community Ecology Institute's Families In Nature Seedlings program was the first group that made us feel at home when we moved to Maryland in 2015 with our infant. Through involvement with CEI, we made long-term friendships, explored and fell in love with natural areas throughout Howard County, and learned about ecology and ways to help our environment. I was so moved by our experience that I remained involved with CEI, volunteering with their Families in Nature Program, at Freetown Farm, and with their Nourishing Gardens program before finding employment with CEI in 2022. This is an amazing program that gives so much to our community and with the support of the county, could reach many more residents, improving our community's overall health and wellbeing.
9	Kim Flyr	Columbia	CEI is showing us a way forward in challenging times. Thank you for supporting their work.
10	Tonya Aikens	Columbia	
11	Joyce Brager	Columbia	CEI has provided a place for our daughter to take classes and learn and grow in the Roots and Wings program since it's inception. We are so grateful for CEI.
12	Adiyah Ali, Ed.D.	Columbia	
13	Katherine Flanagan	COLUMBIA	
14	Meghan Patricia Cole	Columbia	CEI has provided me with a wonderful education through their Nourishing Gardens program that I am now able to share with my community at the garden installed by CEI at THES. Their programs provide opportunities to learn how to grow food and build community. Both are so needed right now
15	Sarah Baumert	Ellicott City	My children have attended the Roots and Wings program at Freetown Farm for the past two years. We feel so privileged that Freetown Farm is part of our community and hope to be connected to this amazing place for many years.
16	Richard Gates	Columbia	With CEI nourishing garden program our family now grows our own food:). Because of the knowledge and support CEI provided. We are using our very limited townhouse space to grow food, support pollinators and hummingbirds. Plus finding ways to grow things in previous unusable areas. This is changing my community by showing what is possible by sharing what I grow and have learned.
17	Rebecca Reese	Fulton	The CEI farm is magnificently active, providing education, community connection and nourishing vegetables for our community! It's a treasure that I wholeheartedly support and I look forward to the robust support of the county as well!
18	Joseph Brager	Columbia	CEI has provided multiple opportunities for my family and I. My daughter goes to the Roots & Wings program which is made possible by CEI. Also this farm has provided many opportunities for volunteering for myself as well! It is a wonderful place to have here in Columbia.
19	Tameka Walker	Ellicott City	CEI is a wonderful organization that somehow manages to provide quality programming to people of all ages! Everyone in my family has been able to benefit from this organization! From my elementary-aged children playing in the woods and learning about local flora and fauna with CFIN, my husband and I learning how to transform our lawn into a vegetable garden with Nourishing Gardens, to my infant son taking in the sights, sounds, and smells at Freetown Farm, we all truly love this organization and support its full inclusion in the county budget!

	Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
20	Kellyn Mahan	Columbia	CEI is an EXCELLENT organization. I have had the pleasure of working with them and I am so impressed with the efforts and commitment that their team and volunteers have. The depth of knowledge and professionalism is profound.
21	Elisabeth Ceysens	Columbia	Helping to grow food that will be used in the community is what we love to do. Every time we volunteer we feel uplifted and grateful for the opportunity to give to the community. CEI makes this possible. Thank you CEI.
22	Georgia Eacker	Ellicott city	
23	Margo Duesterhaus	Ellicott City	
24	Mary Trumbauer	Columbia	
25	Joanne Serelis	Clarksville	It is a mini community that is energizing!! Love to see young adults enjoying working there. Love it!!
26	Chris Roscoe	Columbia	Our family has grown our connection with nature and made lifelong friends for our children through this community. CEI has an outside impact in Howard County compared to its modest budgetary needs, and the county should continue to robustly fund its ongoing efforts.
27	Sara Smith	Elkridge	I am astounded in the amazing transformation of the Freetown Farm property since it was purchased by CEI in 2019; it brings a big smile to my face every time I am on the property. I can not wait to see all the ways the organization makes community connections and provides opportunities to community members of all ages in the year to come!
28	Cassie Kilroy Thompson	Clarksville	
29	Kurt Schwarz	Columbia	
30	Deeba Jafri	Elkridge	
31	michael hindle	Catonsville	
32	Lisa Otero	Laurel	
33	Angela A Nichols	Woodstock	
34	Paula J Bernal	ELLICOTT CITY	CEI is not just a breath of fresh air for our community, but a wind of change. Our family has been able to enjoy so many hikes, community engagement programs, workshops and environmentally oriented activities that I have definitely lost count. This type of organizations allow people to come together with their community and environment in a seamless way. This is what sprouts kindness, caring and real connection in our beautiful county. Nothing better than teaching the next generation to be involved than by example. This organization and it's space is invaluable for us to keep growing and connecting. Let's keep growing!
35	Bhodi Tims	Laurel	I managed the Green Farmacy Garden for the Maryland University of Integrative Health and helped guide the ownership transition to CEI. They are doing important work in conservation and education. Howard County is a better place with the respective ecosystems that CEI stewards available to the county's citizens.
36	Carri Beer	CATONSVILLE	CEI is the embodiment of regenerating community, the natural environment, culture, economies, and the built environment within an educational and replicable model that our world needs!
37	Claudia Lafuse	Columbia	
38	Maya Silver-Isenstadt	Columbia	
39	Madelyn Bloom	Columbia	
40	Annie-Sophie Simard	Ellicott City	
41	Matthew Jacobsen	Pasadena	
42	Zaneta Trent	Howard County	
43	EVELYN MOGREN	Columbia	I have taught woodcarving at the farm and being part of the Scouting community, I know the Scouts of the area benefit from the Ecology Institutes programs also!
44	Kimberley Delmar	Columbia	What a wonderful place to volunteer with like minded folk who strive to make this world a better place for all! Please keep the 2024 budget intact!
45	Peter Fath	Baltimore	
46	James Carter	Clarksville	
47	Marvin Scarborough	Brooklyn	
48	Michael Wagner	Columbia, MD	

Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
49 Ann Wing	Columbia	CEI' with Freetown Farm ,has created a place where a diverse group people have gathered and worked together, nourishing each other while growing food to nourish those who need it most. I have sweated while pulling weeds and moving soil with children and teens I never would have met elsewhere, We have discovered worms and grubs, tiny tiny spiders, and toads while watching seeds become lettuce and squash. We got muddy. And it was OK. In the process, the earth has become more than where we put our feet, Others live there, food and flowers come from it, It smells good. These are experiences that can't be found in books or the internet. They open eyes and encourage curiosity. The physical work brings strong bodies and calmer minds.Working on a project with people of diverse backgrounds brings understanding. These are all needed in the world today. CEI is unique. It is providing a place for this to happen. It needs our support.
50 Jonathan Andre McKinney	Columbia	
51 Katherine Grastorf	Columbia	
52 Gary Pilarchik	Glenelg	CEI and Freetown Farm build community, support wellness, and make Howard County a better place to live. They create a space for people to gather, learn, and share life. We dont need another winery or beer garden (they are great)... just need more amazing places to grow food and experience Nature.
53 Jacquelin T McCoy	COLUMBIA	CEI is a valuable community asset - a shared space.
54 Leena Singh	Laurel	CEI is doing such important work to promote the families and communities of Howard County. I have witnessed first hand the role and power of this transformational space in building connections, promoting healing, and encouraging the growth of our society at large.
55 Buffy Illum	Ellicott City	
56 Gary Krause	Laurel MD	
57 Bettina Krause	Laurel	
58 Geoff Carton	Clarksville	
59 Michael Billard	Laurel	The CEI team is building meaningful connections related to utilization of natural resources for the benefit of the Howard County community. Through its outreach and education programs, one of which I recently participated in, it is able to contribute well beyond its formal budget and staffing resources by developing potential lasting volunteers and socially conscious neighbors. I certainly support maintenance of CEI's budget through 2024.
60 Jessica MacCartee	Ellicott City	My children have been involved in the Roots and Wings Learning Community for several years and they have learned so much from the program. They continue to learn about our natural environment and how to care for it year after year. This will have a lasting effect on our community as they take this education and share it with others!
61 stuart silver	Columbia	
62 April Lee	Ellicott City	I am the pantry manager for Columbia Community Care. The impact of donations of fresh produce that we receive from CEI is immense. We serve about 300 families or 1,500 per week. During most of the year when CEI harvests, these 1,500 residents of Howard County get nutritious farm-fresh produce that is not available to them from other food banks and beyond the reach of their meager food stamp benefits. CEI's contributions to the well-being of this community are immeasurable.
63 Ashley Calkins	Ellicott City	
64 Mary Ann Barry	Columbia, Md 21045	I am a member of Transition Howard Co now part of CEI. We have been very excited about all the progress and impact CEI has had on the community. We started with a couple of community gardens but CEI has made it an very effective program, Nourishing Gardens. We started with a Repair Cafe, repairing and teaching people to repair and CEI has supported the program, provided space and expanded to maker programs. I love to see how much they have provided opportunities to youth and student groups, other diversified groups and a working farm. It is a wonderful resource for Howard Co and I support their inclusion in the county budget.
65 Marny Helfrich	Columbia (King's Contrivance)	My daughter and I attended the first Columbia Families in Nature (now Community of Families in Nature) event in March of 2014 and have since attended too many to count! We discovered areas of the county we didn't know existed, learned about plants and animals, learned how to camp, and made wonderful friends. We have also become active volunteers at Freetown Farm. CEI has been a huge part of my daughter's childhood, building a connection to nature and her community that she will take with her into high school next year and beyond. Please support CEI in making the same kind of difference for other families!
66 Janssen E. Evelyn	Columbia	A lot of the work that my family and I do in the community is connected to the Community Ecological Institute - including the NAACP's George W. Carver 'Growing Food Together' garden. CEI is a necessity and a blessing to this community - one that teaches the importance of connection/knowledge of the natural world, the need to preserve it, and, more importantly, that all are welcome. County Executive Ball's proposed funding for the CEI reflects it's vital importance and should be kept intact.
67 Rian Hart	Catonsville	

	Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
68	Jeff Agnor	Clarksville,	
69	Valerie Stanford	Highland	
70			As a supporter of Columbia Community Care (CCC), I donate food, diapers & more as well as facilitate monetary donations through my church to CCC to help Howard County families in need. The Institute installed a series of raised garden beds at CCC's pantry at 10750 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia. The garden will allow CCC to grow its own healthy produce to promote families' nutrition. In addition that means funds previously spent on veggies can be used elsewhere. That's a win-win, so please help CEI continue to improve lives--and the environment--in Howard County.
71	Kimberly Dorsey Bronow	Ellicott City	
72	Delena Williams	Odenton	
73	Ari Silver-Isenstadt	Laurel	CEI was a lifesaver during the pandemic. It continues to enrich our community and is fabulous at bringing people together.
74	Smrithi Raman	Columbia	We're so appreciative of the impact that Freetown Farm has had on our community. As a volunteer, I have learned so much about nourishing farming/gardening practices, and it has inspired me to create my own edible garden and pollinator patch! We're grateful to have this incredible community resource and all the other programs that CEI supports.
75	Erica Jones	Columbia	
76	Edwin Gould	Columbia Maryland; Allview Estates	I am a retired ecologist with a career as Professor at Johns Hopkins U 18y and Curator at the Smithsonian 16y . In my 90th year CEI provides enormous meaning to my life. Freetown Farm is a place where I can teach children and interact with adults who care about the quality of Howard County environment. CEI is in step with the world's concern for environmental awareness and the gift that nature provides to our lives. The program is a magnificent attribute of forward thinking and action. I encourage full funding as requested.
77	Lindsay Kreisher	Sykesville	CEI has been a constant place of learning, growth and support. I am grateful for this organization every day.
78	Chelsea Clark	Catonsville	
79	Danielle Webber	Columbia	CEI is an integral part of our family's life, and a valuable contributing member of our community. When we decided to homeschool, we never imagined we'd find a place that felt so right to us, but we found it with the Roots and Wings program through CEI. CEI is invaluable and should remain in the county's budget so that it can continue offering the variety of programs, education, and beauty tucked within Columbia that it provides so many of us.
80	Heather Johnson	Catonsville	
81	George Clark	Catonsville	
82	John Halley	Elkridge	
83	Linda Schiffer	Columbia	Please support CEI. This is a community opportunity to cherish nature and natural processes first hand - a chance that many urban and suburban dwellers rarely enjoy.
84	Maria Spiegel	Pikesville, MD	
85	Gal C Chivvis	Highland	
86	Megha Sheare	Ellicott City	
87	Malynda Madzel	Columbia	
88	Theresa Taylor	Columbia, MD	
89	Alysha Carver	Laurel MD	CEI has been instrumental in connecting our family to environmental education at a time when I as a parent have been unable to physically assist my children in exploring the outdoors as much as I would like. The programs offered by CEI have allowed my children to connect with nature in the Howard County community and share with our household several ways we can help improve our environment or serve our community.
90	Frank Hopper	Columbia	Our 7yo twins are enrolled in the Roots & Wings program at CEI, and it's been life changing. As a result, we've planted several small gardens at home, with vegetables and native plants to support local pollinators. We're also building a chicken coop in our back yard, and looking forward to being able to harvest eggs starting in the Fall. None of this would have happened without the influence of CEI. Our kids love the Freetown Farm and they've learned so much about conservation and maintaining healthy natural spaces.
91	Heidi Tilkens	Laurel	
92	Michele Bickley	EC	
93	Kerry Martin	Silver Spring	

	Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
94	Lynn Green	Laurel	I am a Nourishing Garden member 2022, it was an amazing experience, Theresa, Gary, Erica, where great teachers. I recommend this program to all my family/friends, and all my Granddaughter PTO Members, there's so much I could say, but to make it Short and sweet, Beautiful & Educational Program!!
95	Elizabeth Gilbert	Savage	
96	Gina Doh	Marriottsville	
97	Mae A. Beale	Columbia	This farm is a needed institution in our community, please support.
98	Colleen Vernon	Columbia MD	My son struggled in school and was regularly in trouble, depressed, and angry. In the Roots and Wings program he is a different kid. This organization and the fabulous instructors bring out his best self, we feel so lucky to have Freetown Farm in our lives.
99	Crystal Morgan	Columbia	
100	Smita Vazarkar	Ellicott City	
101	Jean M Fregeau	Columbia	CEI cultivates community and environmental stewardship. These are two very strong components of mental health. As a recently retired HoCo teacher and participant in the CEI Nourishing Gardens program, I wish that every HoCo student had this exposure.
102	Terri Berkheimer	Laurel	The sense of community, learning and growing together is a highlight of time spent with CEI.
103	Deborah Lavine	Clarksville	
104	Joi Howard	Crofton	
105	Christine Altom	Ellicott City	CEI has provided wonderful opportunities for our boys to be engaged in excellent outdoor programming.
106	Rachel Skelton	Woodbine	Roots & Wings has been amazing for our family!
107	Simon Sauvageau	Columbia	CEI has really allowed for my love of people & plants blossom into a huge part of my life!
108	Justin Chen	Baltimore	CEI is a space for community healing, both by providing a physical green space perfect for creating new relationships and for learning how to take care of our environment. It also plays a crucial role in feeding folks that experience food insecurity with fresh, regeneratively grown produce.
109	Shante Sims-Westray	Columbia-Running Brook	CEI has reawakened my passion and love for gardening and nature. With the hustle and bustle of everyday living, I'd lost sight of how beneficial being in nature and nurturing and caring for plants and wildlife can be for your mind, body, and soul. I'm so much more happier and less stressed since I began gardening. With the knowledge I've learned from CEI, I hope to pay it forward and introduce my children and others to gardening and environmentally sustainable stewardship.
110	Claudia Sommers	Jessup	My family has grown so much to love the outdoors and explore Howard county through the many programs offered through CEI. We look forward to continuing our journey of adventure with them.
111	Patricia Smith	Columbia	The CEI gardening class not only provided me the information I needed to improve my home area but led me to see the wonderful contributions many in my own community are making to help each other.
112	Kristen Browne	Laurel	We have been members of the CEI's Community of Families in Nature (CFIN) for the past year and it's been a wonderful way to get outside more regularly in all kinds of weather, meet other families during our outings, and explore fun places in HoCo and beyond. Finding a way to continue to connect with families and nature, even during the pandemic, has been possible thanks to the CEI's program!
113	Isha McKnight	Hanover	
114	Anne Gonnella	Ellicott City	The range of services provided by CEI have made a huge impact on our family. The Roots and Wings homeschool program that both of my children attend has been wonderful. My father assists with the Repair Cafe, and now that it has a permanent home at the farm, this service will be able to settle and grow. I myself teach workshops in the newly opened barn, and of course, we have bought plants there for our own garden. I look forward to the many more services the community will benefit from going forward. We are in dire need of sustainability education for our future and our children's future and CEI will. be an important contributor to this endeavor.
115	Kenneth Stailey	Columbia	CEI helped me overcome the trauma caused to me by the pandemic.
116	Courtney Lam	Columbia	We appreciate CEI being a part of the community and the roots and wings program they offer as well as the community they are building.
117	Amy Lynne Bers	Ellicott City	CEI has provided free and low cost opportunities for my family for many years. I credit CEI and their programming for inspiring my kids' love of science and their appreciation of the environment and nature. We have also built a community of friends and a support network through CEI's Families in Nature program, which is accessible to families regardless of income.
118	Holly Bohart	Ellicott City	

	Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
119	Martine Stuppard	Columbia	
120	Grace Goldman	Baltimore	
121	Riley Middleton	Ellicott City	
122	Rev. Dr. Barbara Morton	Columbia	
123	Amber Drenner	Ellicott City	CEI is a haven for young people like my 3 daughters to learn about growing their own food and how open spaces can feed local non-profits. CEI has been an amazing partner professionally as I work with them to bring United Way volunteers out from workplaces across Central Maryland to learn about the importance of growing healthy foods, garden education and land preservation and historical preservation as well. Gardens are a gathering place for community to connect, unite, discuss and heal. We are very blessed to have this farm and the amazing staff and board that support CEI be so intentional and dedicated to spreading important knowledge through their work at the farm.
124	Brian Lau	Ellicott City	The CEI has such a large impact on everyone of all ages!
125	Mackenzie Malli	Columbia	
126	Shyla Cogar	Sykesville	
127	Mary Rodgers	Columbia	Our congregation (the Unitarian Universalist congregation of Columbia) partnered with CEI to establish a nourishing garden at the Owen Brown Interfaith center. The positive impact for the Cradlerock Childrens Center, our congregation and the Owen brown neighborhood is huge!
128	Mary Laituri	Columbia	
129	dina boogaard	ellicott city	
130	Teri & David Saunier	Columbia, MD	CEI has been an amazing organization for our family from the beginning. We participated in Columbia Families in Nature and our kids are currently in their Roots and Wings program. They do amazing things for the community and the environment. Please continue to offer them funding so they can continue and grow. Thank you.
131	Joseph Solomon	Clarksville	CEI has encouraged my family to get outside and support the beautiful nature in Howard County
132	Alice Underwood	Ellicott City	
133	matthew wagner	glenwood	CEI has provided our family with so many great opportunities get outside, connect with other families and involve ourselves in stewardship for the community. Their programming and community involvement has provided us many opportunities to learn and give back.
134	Y.A.	Ellicott City, MD	
135	Audrey Flake	Washington, DC	
136	Robin Hessey	Columbia	
137	Mindy Golden	Columbia	CEI, and Freetown Farm in particular has done a remarkable job of creating a beautiful space where people of all races, religions, and beliefs can work together side-by-side. I enjoy my time volunteering there very much.
138	Lindsay Wagner	Glenwood	CEI has opened our eyes to so many nature-based opportunities in our community. Please continue to support this valuable and affordable programming in Howard County!
139	Corine van der Weele	Ellicott City	I participated in the class nourishing gardens. I learned a lot about how to take care of my vegetable garden and successfully grow some of my own food. I also learned a little bit about how I can help native plants and animals on my property. Most importantly I was able to connect with like minded which has energized me to try to have a positive impact within Howard County.
140	Lisbeth Jorgensen	Sheboygan, WI	My family has supported CEI since Chiara started CFIN years before Freetown Farm was a possibility. CEI has brought such wonderful opportunities to our community with Freetown Farm and the new property. Our decision to move away to be close to family has not tempered our support for Chiara and CEI's important projects, we still donate monthly and will continue doing so. And we support the county budget including funding for CEI as a resource that benefits all Howard County residents. Thank you, Dr. Lisbeth Jorgensen
141	Lindsey Sands	Columbia	
142	Tammy Eves	Columbia, MD 21046	Soon after discovering CEI, I became involved as a volunteer at Freetown Farm. This organization positively impacts so many and so much, in immeasurable ways, with so little resources. Please support CEI's commitment to community, a sustainable environment, equity, and providing opportunities to engage in activities to educate and better our community, which support health for us, the ecosystem, and ultimately the planet. This is where I want my tax dollars to go! Thank you!

	Form Field 1	Form Field 2	Comment
143	Andrew Robert Heffner	Columbia	
144	Niubol Malual	Glen Burnie MD	
145	Pete Doob	Columbia	CEI is doing a great job training the next generation and that generation's kids to actively care for and advocate for the Earth. After all, a good planet is hard to find. So we better protect the one we've got!
146	Laura Salganik	Columbia	
147	Rebekah Hager		
148	Christine Crandell	Columbia	
149	Jessica Masciantonio	Fulton	
150	Veronica Grissom	Ellicott City	
151	Katie Hall	Ellicott City	
152	Ken Crandell	Columbia	
153	Ava Suko	Dayton	As a high school student, the Community Ecology Institute has provided me with incredible opportunities to learn about and connect with my surrounding environment that I could not find anywhere else. I am so grateful to have found CEI!
154	Sean Miller	Laurel	CEI has had a major impact on many communities, serving as a safe space and an educational space for all. I've enjoyed volunteering with CEI in the past, and hope to volunteer again soon.
155	Thomas Fador	Catonsville	
156	William P Webster	Columbia, MD	CEI does very important work in the community by teaching all people where their food comes from. In these days of food insecurity and the growing recognition that our bodies are strongly impacted by WHAT we eat, this is a critical service to Howard County. I strongly urge this budget request be approved. Thank you.
157	Anisha Thompson	Ellicott City	As a student achievement liaison within Howard county public school system, CEI has provided internship opportunities to students to help them develop, explore, and grow. Prior to the internship opportunity students had limited exposure to gardening and ecology. I am grateful for CEI and support in continuation of empowering youth and the community.
158	Amanda Morton	Columbia	It has been a wonderful experience for the children of our center to be able to work in the garden and learn so many different methods of planting and nurturing under the tutelage of the volunteers. This has been a crucial experience for the children.
159	Samara Porte	Columbia	
160	Ian Martinson	Columbia	CEI enabled me to do my Eagle Scout project. It was a great opportunity for me, and it has led me to be more passionate about the things CEI is passionate about, which I think has a good impact on everyone.
161	Bethany D Gregg	Baltimore	CEI has been an important place for my oldest child this academic year. It has provided an opportunity to be immersed in a welcoming, supportive community while being surrounded by nature.
162	Michelle Heffner	Columbia	We just love how Freetown Farm has helped our high school senior connect with his local community and he is now going on to get his degree in plant science at Howard County Community College.
163	Susan Hill	Columbia	Wonderful shared gardening experience that builds community while it educates!
164	Caela Barry	Elkridge	The way CEI builds community resilience (through practical skills and connections between people) is worth supporting. I always learn something when I go to CEI, and it's always a good day. Thank you for preserving funding for this valuable local organization.
165	Albert Holm	Columbia	
166	Joshua Geiger	Columbia	I have been helping out at CEI for a few months now and the experience has been amazing. It is a beautiful community of like-minded individuals all working toward a greater good. Truly inspiring and I am so grateful to be a part of it.
167	Dana Belanger	Baltimore	I work at CEI with our youth farm-based education program, Roots & Wings, and I manage our Youth Garden. I have been with CEI for a couple years now and can't speak highly enough of the impact this land, our work, and the people that come together and collaborate to bring the organization's mission into fruition. Our energy, beliefs, focus, and motivation to continue, strengthen, and fortify our impact in the community, to create community cohesion and change agents, is strong and ever growing.
168	Leah Halley	Elkridge	

Respass, Charity

From: Meg Boyd <meg.boyd@howardnature.org>
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2023 3:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Amendment 9 - preservation easement

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council members,

Regarding Amendment 9 to the budget, The Conservancy holds the preservation easement on the Rockburn Park parcel under consideration for construction of a community center. We disagree with the county's interpretation that a community center can be built on this site. I am available to answer any questions you may have at 410-206-1601.

Thank you,

Meg

--

Meg Boyd
Executive Director
Howard County Conservancy
Connecting People to Nature
meg.boyd@howardnature.org
410-465-8877
[Website](#)
[Support the Conservancy](#)



Respass, Charity

From: Robert Dudley <Robert_Dudley@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 23, 2023 12:00 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; BoE Email
Subject: Support for Environmental Education Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dr. Ball, Howard County Council members, and members of the Howard County Board of Education,

I cannot state in any stronger terms my opposition to the proposed cuts to the environmental educator position at the Howard County Conservancy. I am a 10-year Howard County science teacher and in my career the Howard County Conservancy, and more specifically its environmental educator, Ann Strozyk, have been instrumental in making Howard County a statewide and nationwide model for environmental education.

I have been involved in the Watershed Report Card Program since its inception and have seen first-hand, having personally guided over a thousand students through it, how students' perceptions of their environment change when they are given the opportunity to be a part of long-term, longitudinal data-collection in citizen science programs. They become much more aware of how their actions impact their surroundings and they make better decisions because of those experiences.

The relatively new Youth Climate Institute is a one-of-a-kind program designed to engage high school students in becoming environmental ambassadors to all who they interact with. This year my first-year chapter produced 9 certified ambassadors, two-thirds of whom have developed their own capstone projects to be completed over the summer so they can earn certified ambassadors with honors status. I could not possibly have run this chapter on my own without the support I have received from Ann and the Conservancy.

While I am not personally involved in the 6th grade Climate Knowledge program, I know from my friends who are middle school teachers that it is highly impactful and very well received by both the students and the teachers.

Ann Strozyk is a nationally-recognized environmental educator in a county with NO dedicated environmental education facility. We have no "outdoor school" like other counties have. The vast majority of the programs she has developed and facilitated are grant-funded, costing the county next to nothing in comparison. The idea that we would even consider cutting such a position at this time, when climate change is a pending existential crisis, is ludicrous, and demonstrates a complete lack of understanding and value of the physical and intangible benefits it provides all of us. Please, find a place to cut spending somewhere else, because this proposed elimination of our sole, dedicated environmental educator would be a devastating loss for us all.

Sincerely,

Rob Dudley (he/him)
Reservoir High School
Anatomy & Physiology Teacher
Biology Teacher

robert_dudley@hcpss.org