

Testimony of Leslie Kornreich

County Council Public Hearing on HCPSS proposed FY 2017 budget

Members of the County Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on the Howard County Public School System budget proposed for FY 2017. In preparation for my testimony, I went to the online budget document on the HCPSS website to compare some numbers from previous fiscal years. Before I could encounter any actual budget numbers, I had to wade through pages and pages of awards, accolades and explanations of Vision 2018. The document is 613 pages long, and appears less a budget document than a marketing package for HCPSS. It makes me wonder how much it cost to produce.

I want to first thank County Executive Allan Kittleman for directing full funding to special education, teacher pay raises and instruction. These are the areas that define the mission of a school system – taking care of the needs of teachers and students. Yet over the last 3 ½ years we have seen a transition to something that undermines that mission. We have seen almost \$2 million moved out of special education over the last 3 fiscal years. Doves of teachers, working under such a climate of fear for their jobs that they cannot advocate for themselves with their own employer, have told parents how the lack of enough teachers and support staff has made their jobs overwhelmingly difficult. Yet last year's budget saw cuts to kindergarten paraeducators and media secretaries, support staff essential to teachers whose class sizes are on the rise and who are taking home mountains of work every night.

What kind of a school system that calls itself "world class" makes the first budget cuts the ones that hurt students and teachers?

And yet, working with no oversight, the majority of the Board of Education has passed along the superintendent's budget to the county executive each year, and we the citizens of Howard County are told there is nothing our county government can do about it. Except this year it appears there is.

This year it appears that our county executive, and hopefully you the county council, have had it with money being moved around in the school system's budget to fund things unrelated to instruction. You have had it with hearing from your constituents that our teachers and students are suffering because their needs are not being met by the current HCPSS administration. You have had it with the stories about special ed students and teachers being bullied by a lawyer retained by the school system who has no incentive to mediate disputes but makes his money taking parents to court. Believe me, we've all had it.

So I am quite heartened to hear that the county executive has not only directed full funding to teacher pay raises, special education and instruction, but increased the amounts for special education and instruction, forcing the school system to find cuts in places that are wasting our tax dollars. Please support him in this effort to bring some accountability and oversight to a piece of the budget that consumes well over 50% of our county tax dollars but has suffered from a lack of oversight by our county government for years.

Good evening, my name is Nick Novak and I am the 1st Vice President of HCAA. I am the proud principal of Howard High School, a parent of a kindergarten student at Deep Run Elementary, and I am here tonight to encourage you to find a way to provide additional funding for the HCPSS FY17 Budget request.

I was here in March on behalf of the 265 school-based and central office based administrators to present testimony to County Executive Kittleman in support of fully funding the HCPSS FY17 Budget Request. I'd like to thank Mr. Kittleman for funding beyond the required maintenance of effort, but I want to also ask the County Council to look closely, to, as so many emails and messages on social media have said, find a way to provide additional funding for HCPSS.

The contract HCAA has negotiated with the Board of Education reflects the strong commitment HCPSS has made to reward the excellence of our work force and maintain our competitive standing in the State. We need your commitment too. Our administrators, our teachers, and the rest of the HCPSS staff will definitely benefit from a fully-funded budget, but this isn't about what some people perceive as greedy educators continuing to ask for more.

It is true that we want more...more for our students. We see everyday how much they benefit from the outstanding programs we implement and so we want more of our students to have those opportunities. We

also see how some of our students face challenges that they must overcome to achieve success. These students need more help, more resources to succeed. The HCPSS budget identifies programs and initiatives to support student success at every level. Each dollar the county spends on HCPSS is an investment in our students and one which will yield incredible results.

I said it in March and I'll say it again now--We've always done what we can to protect the classroom, but students are the ones who suffer most with budget cuts or funding that doesn't keep pace with enrollment growth. They are the ones who are short-changed. I don't want that for my son as he prepares to enter 1st grade. I don't want it for the almost 1800 students at Howard High. I don't want it for any student in the HCPSS. Let's invest in the future by fully-funding the FY17 Budget Request. Thank You.

When I moved to HOCO in 2001, words that came to mind when I fondly thought about the HCPSS were world class, opportunity rich, progressive, pride, a place where children receive a comprehensive education and begin their journey of living the American Dream. I was happy to see my tax dollars support such a wonderful system even though at this time I was not a parent.

Sadly these adjectives have changed in the past three years. The HCPSS leadership seems to have complete disregard for students, teachers, staff, parents and anyone who questions, challenges or disagrees with any proposal put into place from HCPSS leadership.

The fiduciary responsibility that falls upon the leadership of the system is to educate our children with fidelity, this seems to have disappeared. The public's trust has been lost (Gov. Hogan), bidirectional and meaningful discussion does not exist, "disdain (Delegate Hill) shown to parents is modus operandi, blatant disrespect is rampant, complete and utter lack of accountability had become the norm, the lack of transparency has reached dangerous levels. Examples include the the handling and disclosure of mold issues, ongoing bullying, teenage suicide, reported assault, disproportionate suspension of African American children, the \$300,000 price for a special education audit that has never been shared in its entirety with the public or requesting county council members. Many of these issues were shared at the December Town Hall Meeting hosted by Delegates Miller and Turner.

Today, I bring to your attention the intimidation tactics and bullying in use against parents. Per our own experience and based on discussions with families, Howard County Public Schools have begun the aggressive use of the legal model against parents who advocate for their children. In the proposed FY 17 budget, I would like to review the "expert legal model" (attached). This model has been introduced as a cost savings strategy in special education in particular.

See Attached Slides:

Slide 1: Legal Services Analysis discussed on 2/16/16

Slide 2: Cost justification that the expert legal model vs. the I house model remains at 0.1% of the operating budget.

Slide 3: Shows projected rise in budgets for legal fees as school systems grow.

First there is floating asterisk without explanation

If you take a close look, however, the per pupil cost per county:

MCPS \$5.57 per pupil

AACPS \$ 11.05 per pupil

BCPS \$ 9.89 per pupil

HCPSS \$ 14.52 per pupil

PGCPS \$ 22.21 per pupil

In FY 15, the other school systems used less than the full budget allocation for Legal services except Howard County. Our approved budget for legal fees in 2015 was \$630,000 with amount actually spent \$776,419

Slide 4: "Special Education Projected Cost Savings";

"The expert legal model has resulted in greater savings in the form of current and future avoided costs. The review of the cost and effectiveness of the current legal model supports continuation of this approach by the board."

While I appreciate county council and county executive do not review the budget by line item, the "expert legal model" requires scrutiny, questioning and should not be funded. What is perceived as cost savings in the short run will cost the county dearly in the long run if children with potential are sidelined and warehoused for short term financial goals. Instead of providing a free and appropriate education and services that allow children to reach their potential in a supportive environment, HCPSS has taken the shortcut by adopting a confrontational and litigious approach.

Many of your constituents, our fellow citizens, don't have the resources or time to engage in protracted court battles and rely on you, our elected representative to ensure the system is fair and just. The "expert legal model" will only serve to grossly undermine the interest and well being of our students. I understand and support the political and economic needs for continuing to have an outstanding school system, however this should not be at the expense of our most vulnerable students.

As a parent and citizen, I am sounding the alarm with respect to the above tactics. As you are well aware, the trust has been broken between many citizens and HCPSS. For children who do not require special education or assistance, we do indeed have one of the best school systems in the country and the best in Maryland; this is not true for all of our learners unfortunately.

This is the only forum, that we the citizens have opportunity to publicly include our input regarding the budget for HCPSS given the dismantling of the citizens budget advisory committee. My fellow citizens—we are the voting, tax paying stakeholders and we can no longer allow this to happen in our county. Our money is welcome but our input is not. Sounds like taxation without representation. We as a community that chooses civility and will and should be judged on how we care and treat our most vulnerable. I implore you to not fund this portion of the budget. The expert legal model is unethical and simply un-American.

Respectfully,
Heidi Abdelhady, MD
County District 4
Maryland Legislative District 12

Legal Services Analysis

Budget Work Session III
February 16, 2016



Howard County Public School System Legal Services Expenditures

The transition to an expert legal model has not increased legal fees as a percentage of the operating budget.

Howard County Public School System							
Legal Services Expenditures							
	Inhouse Model				Expert Model		
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Inhouse Legal Model	\$ 429,085	\$ 434,139	\$ 183,018	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Expert Legal Model	235,609	295,641	435,947	843,187	776,419	795,000	825,000
Total Legal Costs	\$ 664,694	\$ 729,779	\$ 618,965	\$ 843,187	\$ 776,419	\$ 795,000	\$ 825,000
Cost as a % of our operating budget	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%



Howard County Public School System Legal Services Cost Comparison

Howard County Public School System Legal Services Cost Comparison*			
	Actual FY 2015	Approved Budget FY 2016	Proposed Budget FY 2017
HCPSS	\$776,419	\$795,000	\$825,000
MCPS	\$851,782	\$1,239,050	\$1,679,020
AACPS	\$866,659	\$950,695	\$1,036,658
BCPS	\$978,719	\$1,081,383	\$1,082,007
PGCPS	\$2,769,634	\$3,673,835	\$3,327,965

A comparison of the FY 2015, FY 2016 and FY 2017 legal costs of MCPS, AACPS, BCPS, and PGCPS to HCPSS highlights some commonalities. As the five largest school districts in Maryland, they are all growing school districts located in the Baltimore-Washington metro area that are projecting increasing budgets for legal fees in line with increasing operating budgets. The rising legal fees for HCPSS, viewed in this light, appear to be reasonable.


HOWARD COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Howard County Public School System Special Education Projected Cost Savings

Howard County Public School System Special Education Projected Cost Savings									
	Inhouse Model				Expert Model				
	FY 2012		FY 2013		FY 2014		FY 2015		
	1 Yr Saving	Total Projected Saving*	1 Yr Saving	Total Projected Saving*	1 Yr Saving	Total Projected Saving*	1 Yr Saving	Total Projected Saving*	
Tuition	\$ 109,432	\$ 552,800	\$ 203,214	\$ 976,533	\$ 264,825	\$ 2,592,869	\$ 421,640	\$ 2,227,793	
Transport	53,542	285,558	53,542	321,252	89,237	1,017,299	71,389	660,352	
Cost avoided HCPSS	\$ 162,974	\$ 838,358	\$ 256,756	\$ 1,297,785	\$ 354,061	\$ 3,610,168	\$ 493,029	\$ 2,888,145	
Total Legal Costs	\$ 729,779		\$ 618,965		\$ 843,187		\$ 776,419		

*Total projected saving is inclusive of 1 year saving.

The expert legal model has resulted in greater savings in the form of current and future avoided costs. The review of the cost and effectiveness of the current legal model supports continuation of this approach by the Board.


HOWARD COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

April 7,2016
RE: FY'17 Capital Budget
Various items

Chairman Ball and members of the County Council:

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on various items included in the County Executive's proposed FY 17 Capital Budget. I also appreciate the Executive's work and decisions on the items that are included in my testimony. I am raising a few questions and pointing out a potential technical error.

Ellicott City projects:

Retaining Walls: B3862. I appreciate the work and cost needed to retain these walls and urge support and completion of the New Cut Road retaining wall .

Court House Renovation: C0290. The funding support for this project has been reduced to zero. The project description states project schedule to be determined. Prior appropriations total \$8.8 million with \$5.7 spent or encumbered through February 2016, note this was the same amount encumbered in FY16. I have read in the paper that a different direction is being sought. Prior to the adoption of the Capital FY17 budget, language should be inserted as to what the plans are for this much needed capital project. It had been anticipated that new construction would occur in FY18/19 with close out in FY20.

Ellicott City Improvements and Enhancements: C0337. A report regarding the stream walls was recently completed along with a list of priority projects. I support the addition of \$5,000 to the current balance of funds approximately \$2.1 million to address these wall projects as well as additional funds projected for FY18 and FY19. This project is also to be used for cross walk needs in Ellicott City. Hopefully the County Executive will be approving a crosswalk across from parking Lot E in upper Main Street. The Ellicott City Partnership supports this very needed crosswalk.

US 40 Corridor Enhancement: C0298. This project has been a slow improvement to US 40 and now moves to some streetscape in selected median areas. No additional funds are budgeted for FY17 but about \$400,00 remains.

Bus Stops

Bus Stop Improvements: C0332. Similar to all of you I am constantly amazed about how many stops are located with just a pole. I am pleased to see an additional \$250,000 suggested for FY17. However the rate of spending, \$74,110 through February 16 is making a small dent in the needed access, safety and comfort improvements for County bus stops. .

Bridge

Bridge Columbia Downtown Columbia Oakland Mills Connections Improvement: B3863. I support and applaud the funds included to conduct the NEPPA study, \$350,000 and planning funds proposed for FY18 \$500,000.

Fire Stations and Protections:

Elkridge: F5964. A major \$3.6 million FY17 added to the current appropriation of \$19.4 million. A much needed facility.

Rural Fire Protection: F5972. A continuation of the much needed cisterns. Improvement in the numbers installed from 24 in FY16 to 33 as of this proposal. I support the additional FY17 request for \$1.2 million, which also includes upgrades to tankers.

Banneker Fire Station: F5551. This 40 year old facility needs to be enlarged and replaced. It is one of the issues related to Downtown Columbia. I note that the FY 16 budget had anticipated \$3.2 million in FY17 and \$11.3 million in FY 18. The County Executive has proposed zero dollars for FY17, 18,19 and 20.

Parks

Parkland Acquisition: N3102. The General Assembly and the Governor have made a major recommitment to Open Space funding. I am not certain that this budget reflects the additional support. However I support the proposed increase of \$1.6 million to this project. My hope is that the County can look at opportunities for land acquisition to enhance the use of State parkland along the Patapsco Valley.

Historic Structures Rehabilitation: N3958. You know that our Recreation and Parks Department has been nationally recognized for its commitment to historical structures. Preservation and rehabilitation is expensive work. Making structures and sites available to the public requires careful planning. Our Department has been a wonderful steward. I support the \$500,000 FY17 proposal.

Blandair Park: N3102. This 298-acre regional park is in the heart of Columbia's east side. The FY 17 request of \$3.5 million provides additional resources for the restoration of the Blandair mansion and outbuildings. It also funds start of Phase three construction and design for phase four.

Ag Preservation and Transfer Tax

Ag Preservation: G0163. No dollars are proposed. I raise a question regarding transfer tax. I thought there was a dedicated percentage of transfer tax specific to Ag preservation? How do we unobligate it?

Transfer Tax Revenue for FY17 is proposed at \$110.5 million, \$300,000 less then the FY 16 approved capital budget amount. I am surprised by this decrease.

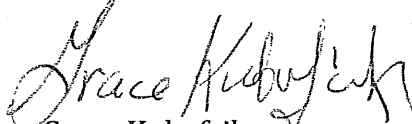
Tax Increment Financing Projects: C0319

TIF Bonds are proposed for \$70 million for Downtown Columbia in FY 17 as well as another \$40 million for FY18. The budget has shown at least since 2010, a \$50 million TIF bonds appropriation. No additional comments are offered for the public to understand the potential use of these funds or the County obligation. Zero has been spent or obligated through February 2016.

The Capital Program summary I think is incorrect related to TIF Bonds it shows prior appropriations of \$67 million. (Note it showed 67Million in FY16.)

I could conclude that the Banneker Fire Station reconstruction project will be part of the TIF bond obligation what else I do not know.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.



Grace Kubofcik
4801 Carman Drive
Ellicott City MD 21043

Attachment

Howard County, MD Capital Program Summary

(In Thousands of \$)

	PRIOR Appropriation	FISCAL 2017 Budget	TOTAL Appropriation	5Yr Capital Improvement Program	Extended Program Total	TOTAL PROJECT
EDUCATION	791,188	92,906	884,094	617,120	632,026	2,133,240
GENERAL COUNTY PROGRAM	572,122	111,163	683,285	352,678	27,533	1,063,496
OTHER PROGRAMS	176,531	0	176,531	0	0	176,531
RECREATION PARKS	185,775	12,232	198,007	53,200	39,750	290,957
TRANSPORTATION	390,434	51,796	442,230	343,010	46,860	832,100
WATER and SEWER	686,942	47,597	734,539	252,356	0	986,895
	2,802,992	315,694	3,118,686	1,618,364	746,169	5,483,219
Revenues						
BONDS	883,765	93,400	977,165	915,900	641,957	2,535,022
COLLEGE REVENUE BACKED BOND	7,717	0	7,717	0	0	7,717
DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTION	37,558	3,694	41,252	14,360	0	55,612
EDUCATION EXCISE BONDS	40,923	2,000	42,923	10,000	0	52,923
EXCISE TAX	19,027	0	19,027	0	0	19,027
EXCISE TAX BACKED BONDS	147,717	18,755	166,472	92,225	0	258,697
GRANTS	223,652	16,047	239,699	76,053	46,250	362,002
IN-AID of CONSTRUCT UTILITIES	25,464	5,805	31,269	16,355	0	47,624
METRO DISTRICT BOND	479,460	36,943	516,403	117,621	0	634,024
OTHER SOURCES	284,687	14,024	298,711	33,589	100	332,400
PAY AS YOU GO	97,321	4,714	102,035	30,218	21,562	153,815
STATE AID for SCHOOLS	184,302	26,050	210,352	66,188	0	276,540
STORM DRAINAGE FUND	2,315	100	2,415	325	0	2,740
STORWATER UTILITY FUNDING	22,075	6,717	28,792	34,400	0	63,192
TIF BONDS	67,000	70,000	137,000	40,000	0	177,000
TRANSFER TAX	119,826	10,500	130,326	54,500	36,300	221,126
UTILITY CASH	136,247	3,745	139,992	116,630	0	256,622
WATER QUALITY State Bond Loan	23,936	3,200	27,136	0	0	27,136
	2,802,992	315,694	3,118,686	1,618,364	746,169	5,483,219

April 01, 2016

Howard County, MD

Version : Executive Proposed

John Suess
Vice President, Font Hill Community Association
3409 Pierce Dr.
Ellicott City, Md 21042

April 7, 2016

Honorable Howard County Council Members,
TESTIMONY FOR COUNTY COUNCIL CAPITAL BUDGET HEARING

Good evening Council members. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak tonight. I am the Vice-President of the Font Hill Neighborhood Association and am here to add our association's support to the establishment of sidewalks along Frederick Road, from Centennial Lane down to St. Johns Lane. The Font Hill Community is located just south of Frederick Rd, near Centennial Lane, and is comprised of roughly 600 homes and families. I want to thank the council for their past support in addressing the issue of power reliability in our community and we now seek your support in creating safe pedestrian access along Frederick Road. With the recent openings of the new Miller Library branch and the Forest Green Shopping Center the issue of traffic, pedestrian, and biking safety on Frederick Rd. has been the #1 concern communicated to the Association.

In 2010, Howard county government produced the Route 40 Design Manual (see <http://dnncquh0w.azurewebsites.net/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=nRtIta-Q4qI%3d&portalid=0>). That laid out design principles for the Route 40 corridor. On page 49, for streetscape design the manual states:

Street Types: The following paragraphs outline design guidelines for public and private streets and their setback areas. The guidelines describe the overall street network and standard street types (Refer to Figure 4B-2).

1. Street Network

Goals: Building a network of street and associated sidewalk connections is fundamental to achieving the goals of developing vibrant, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented centers within the Route 40 corridor.

Separate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems to provide a safe and efficient road network. The safety and mobility of through-traffic can be enhanced by minimizing the number of access points to private property

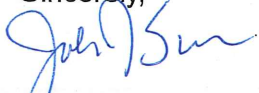
from public streets. Wherever feasible and supported by SHA and the County, utilize medians to improve the appearance of the corridor and to provide safe refuge for pedestrians crossing the street.

An interconnected network of roads and sidewalks that provide improved, direct, local circulation will provide for enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit opportunities. To the extent that greater parcel interconnections can be realized over time, pressure on Route 40 to carry all vehicle trips can be reduced.

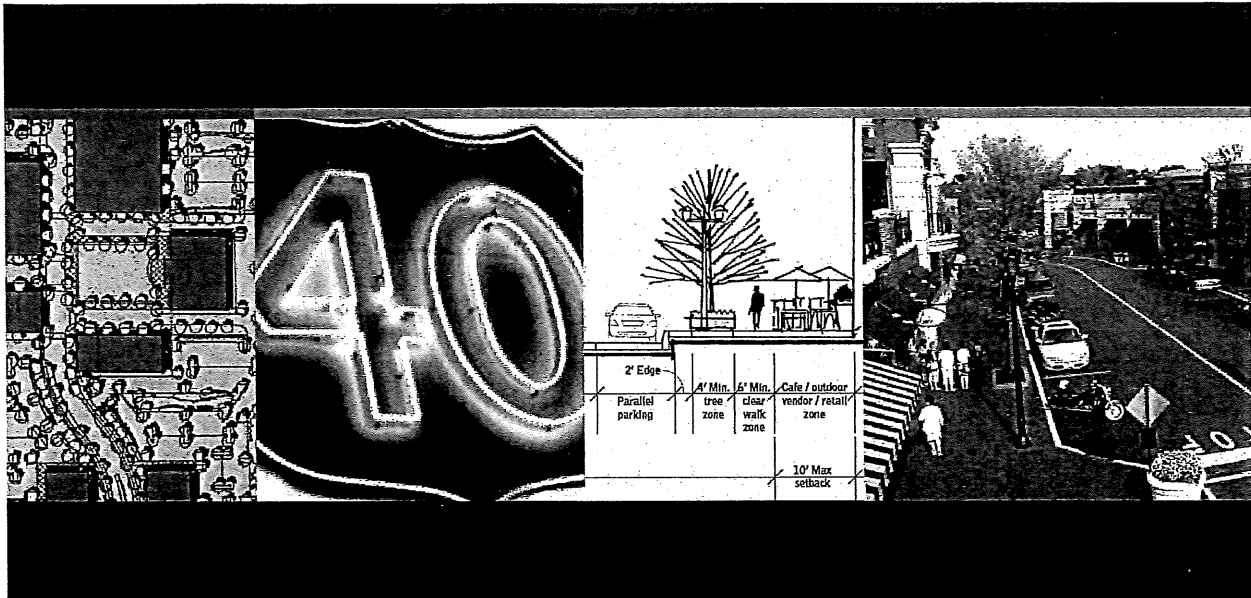
Today, for a resident to walk to Miller Library requires navigating over the bridge at the Little Patuxent that has no shoulder on either side. To reach the shopping center requires navigating on Frederick road in an area with no sidewalks or shoulders. This lack of safe pedestrian access on a road frequented by joggers and bicyclists is a safety risk as traffic continues to increase. Sidewalks between St. Johns and Centennial follow the design plans approved in 2010 and would allow those that live in Dunloggin, Gray Rock, or other communities to walk safely to the shopping center. Likewise, our community would be able to easily walk the mile to Miller Library.

In closing, the Font Hill Community Association strongly supports the goal of installing sidewalks on Frederick Rd. As of today, the communities along have seen substantial development along Frederick Rd. Forest Green, the Lutheran Homes, and new development on Frederick west of Centennial. We believe that providing safe and walkable communities is important to creating strong community bonds and healthy lifestyles.

Sincerely,



John Suess



Route 40 Design Manual

Howard County, Maryland

July 2010

Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043



PERMISSION SLIP

I give permission for my County Executive/County Council Member, _____
(circle one) (state name)

to take a trip to the land of frugal living to hold the line on spending so that seniors on fixed incomes and those hard working folks who earn less than the famous Howard County median household income can continue to live here.

Liability statement: I will hold the above named elected official harmless for providing only Maintenance of Effort funding to the school system this year and in the future until student achievement and teacher support are prioritized over central office positions and perks.

I am available to chaperone.

Susan Garber 04/07/16

(Name of Taxpayer)

(Date)

TESTIMONY FOR COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
MAY 4, 2016

PRESENTED BY – BITA DAYHOFF
PRESIDENT
COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL OF HOWARD COUNTY, INC.

Good evening. My name is Bita Dayhoff, I'm the President of the Community Action of Howard County, the County's designated anti-poverty agency. I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of County Executive Allan Kittleman's FY 2017 operating budget, and applaud you and the County Executive for your support of programs designed to help Howard County's low income families.

CAC's mission is to diminish poverty, enable self-sufficiency and advocate for low-income families and individuals. Every day, we see families who are on the verge of losing their home, who have gone without food, whose electricity has been turned off or is on the verge of being turned off. And every day, we help our clients through a variety of programs that are designed to move them past crisis and into self-sufficiency. In many cases, the Community Action Council is their last resort.

In our role of educating the community about poverty and providing oversight of federal and State government's Energy, Food, and the Head Start program, we are always working to better understand our community and its needs.

In 2015, CAC conducted a county wide community assessment that reflected major changes in the county's socio-economic status as it relates to poverty and the number of individuals who are struggling to make ends meet despite the fact that they are working and doing all that they can to get by.

Data reflects that in Howard County, 7% make less than \$25,000 per year, 15% of Howard County residents are food insecure, and almost 14% of our population is Asset Poor, meaning that without an income, they would not have enough resources to live at poverty level for a 3 month period.

But what was shocking to learn is that Poverty among children has increased by 32% from 2003 to 2013 – and it has doubled from 5% to 10% over the last 6 years.

We simply cannot afford to have the number of our children living in poverty double every six years. They are our most vulnerable residents.

In response to this information, we expanded our Head Start and Pre-k services by adding 20 new slots, and making the program full-day full-year for 284 children. Throughout this process, CAC received the highest score of excellence in Maryland Excels program from MSDE, and we are positioned to add more slots if funding becomes available. Additionally, recognizing the importance of a two generational approach, whereby we create opportunities for families by addressing the needs of parents and their children simultaneously, we have integrated our housing program with an asset building program in order to decrease the percentages related to asset poverty in the county.

CAC continues to see an increase in the need for our services across the board. Through our Housing program, we helped prevent 311 families from facing eviction and homelessness; 6,000 families received Energy Assistance, 27,000 individuals received food assistance, 400 households received Weatherization, and we responded to 10,000 calls seeking information and referral about county services.

When I think about the commitment it takes to provide these services, and the extent of support for our programs, it's impossible not to think of you. Thank you for your devotion to our families and for your support as we continue to provide innovative programs to lift families out of poverty.

These problems are solvable in Howard County and we are grateful to have you as our partner in this process.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY FOR COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
MAY 4, 2016

PRESENTED BY – GLADYS LEE STATON
COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL OF HOWARD COUNTY, INC.

Good Evening, my name is Gladys Lee Staton.

I stand in support of Community Action Council of Howard County.

I can personally testify how the programs offered by CAC are beneficial in helping Those in need due to financial hardship.

I was born in Howard County and raised by my grandmother. At the age of 4 I lived on Harless Farm in West Friendship. I remember waiting with excitement for the two Head Start teachers who came once a week to my home to prepare me for Kindergarten.

At the age of 14, I enrolled in the Summer Youth Employment Program and I was assigned to work at Community Action Council, where I received hands-on training as a Head Start receptionist.

In 1988, I enrolled my 3 year old daughter in the Head Start program. And applied for and was selected for full time position at CAC as the Head Start secretary.

In 2003, my daughter graduated from Atholton High School as part of the National Honor Society as well as the Spanish Honor Society. In 2007, she graduated Cum Laude from Boston University and in 2011, received a master's degree from University of Pennsylvania.

This June, I will be celebrating my 28 year anniversary at CAC. Through the years, and after many opportunities for attending training sessions and then college, I was promoted to the fiscal department and serve as the Fiscal Manager.

I share this to say, that the programs offered by Community Action Council are not to give people a hand out, but a hand up. And, I am grateful for what CAC has done for me and my family.

Howard County General Hospital
Office of the President
5755 Cedar Lane
Columbia, MD 20144
410-740-7710 T



HOWARD COUNTY
GENERAL HOSPITAL
JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE

TESTIMONY – FY 17 OPERATING BUDGET -- SUPPORT

The Honorable Dr. Calvin B. Ball, Chairman
Howard County Council
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21044

Dear Dr. Ball and Members of the Howard County Council:

Thank you for your continued support of Howard County General Hospital, and for your efforts to ensure the best possible health care for your constituents, the residents of Howard County.

Howard County General Hospital, as you know, is the only hospital in Howard County, and our mission is to provide the highest quality care to improve the health of our community. We fulfill that mission through an unwavering commitment to patient safety, and through collaboration with community leaders like yourselves.

As our community grows and changes, and becomes older and more diverse, our health care needs are changing. For many of us, the front door to Howard County General is the Emergency Department. In fact, 70 percent of the beds in our hospital, on average, are occupied by a patient who was admitted through the Emergency Department.

We care for about 60,000 adults each year in our Emergency Department, and our 36 beds are almost always filled. We are constantly striving to improve our performance, and we know we must do better to reduce wait times and improve patient experiences. In the past year, we have implemented a number of operational and management changes to make sure that emergency patients receive treatment as quickly as possible. We have also worked with the community to promote the use of urgent care facilities – we have 17 of them in Howard – as well as primary care physician offices, for more routine cases.

The overall goal is to appropriately reduce the utilization of our Emergency Department, insuring that patients receive their care in the most appropriate setting. While that effort has been successful, our volume continues to grow. The reality is that our hospital is no longer the right size for the community we serve. When in-patient beds are filled, we can't move patients out of the Emergency Department at the rate we would all like.

We are undertaking a planning process to chart our future needs and growth, and we look forward to providing you with more information about that in the future.

In the near term, we are launching a renovation project that will reconfigure the layout of our Emergency Department to maximize the use of our existing space, providing a better patient experience and some capacity improvements.

We will be creating space for a medical screening process that will allow patients to receive an initial evaluation sooner. We will create a "fast track" area that will allow patients with less serious conditions to see a doctor and return home more quickly.

We will also increase the capacity of our isolated behavioral health unit, the fastest-growing demand for care, where emergency patients with acute behavioral needs are treated. Overall, this renovation will improve efficiency of care, and make the patient experience better. It is not a complete answer, but it is a smart start.

We are thankful that Howard County Executive Kittleman has proposed that Howard County Government be a partner in this important project. The Executive's FY 17 budget submission includes the first of four proposed installments that would provide about half the needed funding for this renovation.

This County investment is vital, because Maryland's unique hospital reimbursement system does not allow Howard County General to recoup costs needed to undertake a project like this. So while the hospital is funding more than \$1.5 million for this initiative, that is money that can't be spent on nurses or technicians or other badly needed types of care.

I ask you to support the proposed budget, because it makes progress in addressing the health of Howard County citizens. I ask you to maintain this critical commitment to healthcare. Thank you for your partnership, your collaboration, and your leadership in making Howard County the healthiest community it can be.

Sincerely,



Steven C. Snelgrove
President



Every Family
Should Have a Home

**Howard County Council Public Hearing
May 4th, 2016**

FY17 County Operating Budget

Good evening Chairperson Ball, Vice Chairperson Weinstein and Council members. As the Executive Director of Bridges to Housing Stability, it is with great honor that I offer this testimony. Bridges to Housing Stability is a Howard County non-profit organization that provides case management and support services to individuals and families that are homeless or within 14 days of homelessness as well as affordable housing services to low-wage, working families with annual incomes between 30 to 60% of the median income. Our vision is for a healthy and affordable Howard County community in which every individual and family has a home and can experience the stability necessary to become a positive contribution to their community.

I would like to begin by recognizing the positive efforts proposed in the FY17 Budget to increase salaries for employees whose compensation has been historically low, for the creation of the non-profit center, and for the review of Community Services Partnership grants to determine permanent funding. Today, I am here to address what we believe is an underfunding of the Department of Citizen Service's Community Services Partnership and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Through funding from Community Services Partnership grants, we have helped many individuals and families transition from homelessness to stable housing through our Housing Stability Program. To date in FY16, as a part of the Coordinated System of Homeless Services, we have rehoused 76 households and provided prevention services to 26 households. Through an ongoing partnership with the Department of Housing, we have helped individuals and families transition from being at-risk of homelessness into stable and affordable housing through our growing Alliance Program. To date, the Alliance has provided affordable housing to 15 low-wage working households in Howard County i.e. a total of 54 individuals of which 30 are children. We are proud to share that 50% of our Alliance households have increased their income and 43% of Alliance households have participated in financial management, which includes budget planning with a Housing advocate whose position is funded by a Community Services Partnership grant. So as you can see, much of the good work we do is made very possible by our ongoing partnership with both departments.

As we see the cost of housing in Howard County remain high and earned wages of the low-income and homeless remain low, we see more Howard County citizens at-risk of homelessness every day. This translates to an increased demand for services to homeless families, increased demand of homelessness prevention, and increased demand for more affordable housing. All of which we are able to impact at Bridges, in large part, due to our relationship with both departments. To be frank, though we applaud the effort to review CSP grants for permanent funding, it seems counterproductive to evaluate a need for permanent funding for Community Service Partnership grant programs and, at the same time, cut their funding. If there is a need for permanent funding then there is a need for ongoing programming. If there is a need for ongoing programming then there should be level or, if not, additional funding. When you see a problem, you add resources to solve the problem - not take them away.

Furthermore, since the start of my work with Bridges to Housing Stability in January 2016, the one consistent county-wide conversation that continues to resound surrounds the need to increase the number of affordable rental units for households that are currently or are about to be homeless because they cannot afford to pay Howard County's high rents. Yet, there is no allocation of funds in the proposed FY17 budget specific to affordable housing services. As has been stated often, the budget reflects the priority of the County. Undeniably, affordable housing services is not a new issue. It is an ongoing issue in Howard County. However, the lack of its reflection in the proposed budget leaves a hole in the continuum of community services and implies a low level of priority in and for Howard County.

In closing, as you are considering this proposed Operating Budget and as we work together in this next fiscal year, we simply ask you to remember the holes and remember the needs. We thank you for this opportunity to not only present our organization's perspective on the budget but to also give voice to those in our community who cannot speak for themselves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Millicent Nwolisa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Millicent Nwolisa MSc.

Executive Director

Bridges to Housing Stability

May 4, 2016

Howie Feaga
3807 Walt-ann Drive
Ellicott City, Md. 21042

Dear Chairperson Dr. Ball, and Members of the Council

I feel that the children of all walks of life, should have the opportunity to be educated in every field of life. Agriculture encompasses just about every other career in the country today. Agriculture has the needs for technology, engineering, manufacturing, management, medicine, and education. Ag needs biologists, chemists, mathematicians, we need all these fields to be successful and the numbers of opportunities are endless. When a child learns about where their fruits and vegetables comes from, or how animals are managed for milk production, cheese and butter, eggs or meat. It opens up a world that not very many kids get to see any more. When they watch how a single kernel of corn, wheat or a cotton seed, turns toward the sky, and grows to it's greatest potential. These things can not be duplicated by any other education. When a child see's how a drone maps a field and sends the information back to a computer so that adjustments in fertilization or pesticide management is applied to one specific area of a field to save the environment from over use of these fertilizer's or pesticides is unmatched anywhere else. Agriculture has it all, to not give all of the kids in Howard County and in Maryland, these basic educational foundations, it is robbing them of the countless opportunities that are out there and you are taking some of life's treasures, and covering them up, and they may never have another chance to discover them.

Thank You, Howie Feaga

Testimony Howard County Council 5/4/16

My name is Edgar Wiggins and I am here testifying in support of the National Family Resiliency Center. Eighteen years ago and in spite of my best efforts my family constellation changed, my two sons and I were shocked by my then wife's decision to end the marriage. My younger son who was 6 years old at the time became quite depressed and expressed suicidal thoughts. Because of the work that I do I took his threats seriously, his older brother who was 10 years old at the time became extremely angry. I am the CEO of a behavioral health crisis service in Baltimore City and yet I was not aware of an organization who specialized in working with families in transition. Fortunately a staff member recommend NFRC as a place where we could get help. Both of my sons were assessed and put into age appropriate groups and I was referred to a Father's Support Group. As a result of the help, care, support and education that we received we were on the road to recovery from what for us was a traumatic situation.

Here are some of the things that I learned from my experience with NRFC:


- Stay out of court, the only children who benefit from adversarial court proceedings are the children of the attorneys
- Mediate don't litigate don't squander your hard earned resources on a fight that probably no one will win
- Develop a guiding principle, make all decisions with the best interest of the children in mind
- This means putting the children first regardless of how you feel about the other parent
- Important question to ask yourself do you hate your ex-spouse more than you love your children
- Co-parenting is the preferred method of raising children for separated and divorced families
- It's important to remember that your former spouse will always be your child's other parent
- There are many ways to be a family find one that works for you and your child (children)
- Take care of yourself, emotionally, physically and spiritually (you need to be the best person that you can be to be the best parent you can be)

As a result of these learnings my sons are happy, educated and successful young men. This could not have been accomplished without the services provided by NFRC. By the way my younger son volunteered for years as a peer counselor, speaking with parents and children and co-leading groups for adolescents about what helps and what hurts during family transitions.

My journey with NFRC began many years ago. I began as a client in crisis, moved to a peer counselor and now have the privilege of serving on the Board of Directors. I have witnessed first-hand the dramatic impact that this organization can have on families struggling with traumatic situations. Let's face it nobody gets married with the idea that I'll be divorced in five, ten or fifteen years. In my position as the CEO of a behavioral health crisis organization in Baltimore City I see every day the effects that crisis situations have on families. Depression, mental illness, substance abuse and suicide can be the tragic outcomes of crisis situations that are

not managed effectively. The National Family Resiliency Center is the only organization that specializes in this needed area and they are a national leader in this important work. I wholeheartedly support their ongoing funding support and encourage you to increase the support that you provide.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edgar K. Wiggins', written over a horizontal line.

Edgar K. Wiggins



TESTIMONY TO HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
OPERATING BUDGET – DEPARTMENT OF CITIZEN SERVICES
COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS

May 4, 2016

Good evening Chairperson Ball, Vice Chairperson Weinstein and Council Members I am Bruce Fulton, Executive Director of Neighbor Ride. We are located at 5570 Sterrett Place, Suite 102, Columbia, MD 21044. As you know, we are a non-profit that provides door-to-door transportation for Howard County residents 60 and over. The service is provided by generous volunteers who schedule the rides and drive seniors using their own vehicles.

In our 12th year of operations, Neighbor Ride volunteers are currently completing over 96% of the requested rides. This current fiscal year we will surpass 16,000 annual trips for the first time and by the end of fiscal year will have provided nearly 120,000 trips since our service began. I am here tonight in enthusiastic support of both the operating grant (\$54,000) and one time project grant (\$50,000 for our Ride Match database) in the proposed FY 17 budget. Neighbor Ride is at a critical juncture in our history and our key priority is making the needed investments to scale our service to the meet the growing demand for supplemental transportation from our older adult population. The projected growth in the county's older adult population is well documented in the recent Planning for the Growth of the Older Adult Population in Howard County report from the Department of Citizen Service

(name?). For Neighbor Ride, this translates into tremendous projected growth in county residents eligible (age sixty and over) for our service from 45,000 in 2010 to 84,000 projected in 2025 to 103,000 projected in 2040. For resident age eighty and over (those even more likely to need a transportation service like Neighbor Ride's) the growth rate is projected to be even faster – 335% increase.

The proposed funding will enable Neighbor Ride to start making key investments in the areas of (1) Volunteer Recruitment, (2) Technology – our Ride Match Database and (3) Client & Volunteer Satisfaction - making it even easier for clients to use our service/volunteers to provide our service and (4) Service Integration – improving our integration with key client needs/destinations (healthcare providers as an example) and high usage older adult groups (retirement communities as an example).

Currently with 4 part-time staff supporting the more than 350 volunteers who generously serve on the Board, do special projects, provide administrative support, coordinate ride requests and provide rides, we are a very cost efficient model of supplemental transportation. In fact, for FY16, leveraging of our current CSP grant with other income sources, and including volunteer time, the return on investment to Howard County residents is being maintained between 16 to 17:1. With the proposed increase in our operating grant and the one time project grant included in the county's proposed operating budget, Neighbor Ride can more confidently make the needed investments for scaling and improving our services to meet the projected growth in the transportation needs of our county's older adult population, while at

the same time working to increase the county's return on its investment in Neighbor Ride.

In closing, I would like to share one client story and comments from two clients.

The story is that of a seventy two year old resident of Columbia who is blind. She qualifies for our Good Neighbor Fund, so the cost of her rides are completely covered by us. She came to Neighbor Ride as a client in early 2014 because she had regular appointments at Blind Industries of Maryland where she participated in a life skills rehab program, support groups and training. Last summer, after providing weekly transportation for her to these activities for nearly a year and a half, we started to receive trip requests from her to a private residence in the county. She had started (and continues today) to volunteer as an in-home trainer for a fellow blind resident in the county.

A client quote:

“When my husband and I moved to Howard County eleven years ago, we were active and in relatively good health. Within the next few years, however, we developed various health and vision problems which necessitated finding an alternative means of transportation. The “family car” was no more. Because of Neighbor Ride, we never missed a beat. We call on Neighbor Ride for church and shopping each week, appointments, restaurants and social events. We’re able to remain independent—which is a blessing for our family as well as ourselves. The greatest source of anxiety for “seniors” is the fear of becoming dependent on

family. Neighbor Ride allays those fears. One of the greatest bonuses of Neighbor Ride is the valued friendships we have developed with your kind and generous volunteers and staff. God bless them!! Our life may not be as spontaneous as it once was, but it's every bit as rich and fulfilling thanks to Neighbor Ride."

And finally:

"Neighbor Ride's volunteers are courteous, thoughtful and caring individuals. This is a remarkable service that takes the stress of finding a ride and turns it into a positive feeling of community."

Again we greatly appreciate the support we've received from the council, the county executive and from so many Howard County residents through their volunteering and financial support.

Thank you for your time this evening.



Howard County Council Public Hearing Testimony
May 4, 2016
County Operating Budget FY 2017

Good evening, Chairman Ball, Vice Chairman Weinstein and Council members. As President of the Association of Community Services, it is my privilege to provide the perspectives of ACS and its members on the Administration's proposed FY 2017 operating budget, the focus of which will be the Departments of Community Resources and Services (DCRS) and Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

Community Services Partnerships

ACS strongly supports and is appreciative of the proposed Community Services Partnership Human Services Grants funding. These grants provide critical operations and programming funding to the nonprofits upon which County government depends. We note, however, that many of the awards are at FY 2016 levels, and point out that as the cost of doing business rises year-to-year, level funding diminishes a service provider's ability to keep and/or hire well-qualified staff, keep the lights on and IT infrastructure current, and undercuts the ability to meet client demand, particularly as data indicate that the need for resources and services continues to increase.

On a positive note, the \$58,000 in one-time grants awarded to Neighbor Ride, Legal Aid and Bridges to Housing Stability are appreciated as an excellent mechanism by which DCRS can assist nonprofits to improve their infrastructure and thereby increase efficiencies and the cost effectiveness of providing client services.

Affordable Housing

There continue to be over 20,000 households in Howard County that earn less than \$50,000. The lack of affordable permanent and supportive housing in our community is a recurring theme within and across human service programs serving these households.

Access to housing at rents that are 30-40 percent, rather than 50-60 percent of household incomes can reduce the need for human services, thereby ensuring

that DCRS investments can, for example: better meet the need for eviction and food bank assistance; better respond to the 461 households that sought help from the Coordinated System of Homeless Services the first six months of this FY 2016 year; and more adequately meet the need for accessible housing for persons with disabilities. Further, permanent and transitional affordable housing can provide a safe and secure environment for domestic violence survivors, youth aging out of the foster system and ex-offenders who are struggling to re-establish their lives.

As you consider this FY 2017 budget proposal, we ask that you pay particular attention to the funding opportunities in the Department of Housing and Community Development that are collaborative initiatives with the Coordinated System of Homeless Services (CSHS) and can have a significant impact on increasing the availability of affordable housing. For example, DHCD's Housing Stability Subsidy Program (HSSP) that is making affordable housing possible merits ongoing—and we would argue increased—support. Also making a positive impact is DHCD's allocation of Housing Choice vouchers as they are available.

In addition to creating new affordable housing units, ACS is supportive of the initial \$2 million proposed for the RENEW program. The potential ten-fold return on the County's investment will create a substantive loan fund accessible to households that struggle because of low incomes with meeting Village and other neighborhood maintenance requirements, thereby enabling them to rehabilitate their homes, remain in their neighborhoods and keep their families stable.

Department of Housing and Community Development

This will be a challenging year for DHCD. ACS certainly supports the addition of administrative personnel to replace expertise that will be lost as the Housing Commission transitions out of DHCD. Let me also suggest that funding be sufficient to attract a new director with experience commensurate not only with overseeing the current MIHU, loan and community revitalization programs, but also with working across the community to create a Howard County Master Housing Plan to serve as a guide to meeting the housing needs of our ever growing and diversifying community, just as is intended with the new *Creating an Age Friendly Community*.

Nonprofit Center

As my final point, I urge your support of the funding proposed for a Howard County Nonprofit Center. To restate the information that Executive Director Joan Driessen provided to Council members in her April 14 letter. For the past several years ACS has been leading an effort to create a nonprofit center to reduce barriers for low-income and foreign-born families, enable organizations to operate more collaboratively and efficiently, and promote the health and wellness of all Howard County residents. We have identified ten nonprofits interested in being part of this model of service, identified a property that fits the space and location needs of these organizations, and developed a viable financial plan.

The Howard County Housing Commission has agreed to serve as the Master Lessee for the Nonprofit Center and will sublease space to the other nonprofit tenants. ACS will manage the center, overseeing the shared spaces and governing bodies. All tenant organizations will participate in the governance of the center. If current lease negotiations and retrofitting remain on track, we anticipate staggered occupancy beginning in early 2017.

\$510,000 is proposed. \$210,000 of that total would be to provide subsidies for the nonprofit tenants (with the exception of the Housing Commission) apportioned relative to the square footage leased by the nonprofits. The remaining \$300,000 would provide for start-up costs (security deposit, common area furniture, moving costs, IT & phone system, etc.). We also will be approaching the private sector for support. There will be multiple ways that they can support and enhance the capacity of the center.

There have been multiple attempts by multiple groups over the past two decades to develop a nonprofit center, but for one reason or another reason those attempts have not succeeded. Finally, a Center seems achievable. The organizations wish to become a part of the Center to better serve their clients, and ACS, which consistently advocates for program and cost efficiencies that can be achieved by increased collaboration across the human services continuum, ask for your endorsement of the Nonprofit Center concept and the funding that will make the vision a reality.

ACS appreciates this opportunity to comment on the Administration's proposed FY 2017 budget. Thank you.



Appreciate the past. **Imagine the future.**

Columbia 50th Birthday Celebration Inc.
6310 Hillside Court, Columbia, MD 21046
columbia@columbiamd50.com
410-423-1878

May 4, 2016

Dr. Calvin Ball
Mr. Greg Fox
Ms. Jen Terrasa
Ms. Mary Kay Sigaty
Mr. Jon Weinstein

To the Howard County Council:

We are preparing to celebrate a community and a significant milestone—Columbia's 50th Birthday. The year 2017 will offer an opportunity to showcase Howard County on a larger scale while sharing what defines a successful Columbia.

Columbia's 50th Birthday Celebration, Inc. (a 501 (c) (3) requested \$150,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 during previous budget hearings to support this noteworthy occasion. We have received word and wish to express our gratitude that \$100,000 has been earmarked in the County Executive's Proposed 2017 Budget--\$50,000 less than we had hoped and likely leading to a shortfall. Grants to community groups will be at significant risk and a reduction in general outreach will occur as a result.

In addition, the County's support for in-kind services: police, fire, emergency, highway and emergency management services has been requested, since acknowledged and indications are--will be granted. For this we are also extremely grateful.

While this leaves us in a position to proceed with caution, we urge the Council to approve the County Executive's Proposed 2017 Budget.

Our goal to generate the awareness of Columbia's history and values continues to take root. **Appreciating the Past. Imagining the Future** the theme for this special initiative will be expressed in all facets of community life through the engagement of residents and local institutions. The ambitions of an extensive, properly managed and promoted celebration requires commensurate funding.

Officers

Victor Broccolino
Chairperson
Melissa Matthey
Vice-Chair/Secretary
Nancy Smith
Treasurer
Michelle Miller
President

Board of Directors

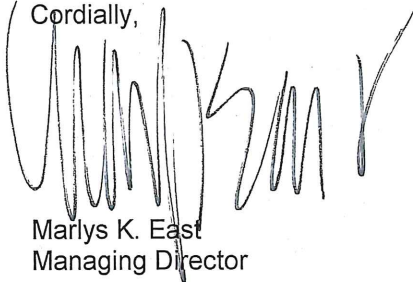
Bridget Graham Howard County Tourism	Rob Goldman Community Member	Jean Parker Merrweather Post Pavilion	Barb Nicklas General Growth Properties
Howard County Public School System	Barbara Kellner Columbia Archives	Harry Oken Community Member	Beverly White-Seals Community Foundation of Howard County
Leonardo McClarty Howard County Chamber of Commerce	Elizabeth Edsall Krumm Howard County General Hospital	Todd Olson Columbia Festival of the Arts	B. Diane Wilson Howard County Government
Jessica Feldmark Howard County Council	Barbara Lawson Community Member	Kelli Shimabukuro Howard County Library System	
	Jean Moon Jean Moon Associates		

Our planning is focused on a noteworthy twenty-six weeks beginning March 20-September 22, commemorating every aspect of community, one which has contributed to the County's outstanding reputation as a great place to live and grow a business.

Should we experience funding hurdles mid-celebration next year at this time, it is within the realm of possibility that we will need to return with a request for additional funding from the County during the FY2018 Budget process.

We respectfully urge you to approve the County Executive's Proposed FY2017 as submitted.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marlys K. East', written over a faint circular stamp.

Marlys K. East
Managing Director

Marlys.east@columbiaassociation.org

My name is Jean Daniello, I live at 5018 West Running Brook Road, Columbia, MD 21044.

To Chairperson Calvin Ball, Council Vice Chairman Jon Weinstein, and Council Members Jen Terresa, Mary Kay Sigaty, and Greg Fox,

I am here today representing The Coalition to Support Therapeutic Recreation. We are a group of families who depend upon Therapeutic Recreation.

The Howard County Recreation and Parks Spring/Summer Activity guide for 2016 is 104 pages long. There are exactly two pages devoted to Therapeutic Recreation. These offerings are for everyone age 2 and up. Today we are mostly concerned with "Out & About" a program for adults ages 22 – 51 years of age. Out & About offers community outings and social activities in a safe setting. Currently Parks & Recreation has four groups on Friday night serving 56 individuals and one group on Saturday night serving 12 individuals.

The program needs to be allowed to expand along with the needs of the community. These programs are in high demand. There are no other similar recreational opportunities for this age range in the county. These programs like all programs run by Parks & Recreation are not free and are paid for by the individual or the family.

When I registered my daughters for Out & About March 6, 2016, I was mortified to see that I almost was too late. If I had waited even five minutes the program would have been full.

Too late for these programs means not registering within the first 15 minutes that registration starts.

In Howard County Registration starts at 6 pm for internet registration for each session. I work in Westminster and barely get home by 6 pm. Some people are still not home by 6 pm. This is a problem because as you can see, the program was entirely filled by 6:30 pm and a wait list was started.

It also means that when my daughters were registered that someone else did not get in. This is significant because this is a community and when someone does not get in then they miss out on spending time in their community, essential for mental health.

If these young adults are waitlisted for them it is a punishment as if they have been grounded.

For me and the other families it means less respite and for some no respite for the entire weekend or longer. The remarkable fact is that this is not a free program. In fact it is a substantial cost of \$160 for a 6 week session. And there is a waiting list that will only get longer.

Are Special Needs individuals always going to be on a waiting list?

Under the current County Administration there has been a decrease in general funds available to fund Therapeutic Recreation Programs.

We know Therapeutic Recreation competes with other essential services including Fire, Police, Public Library System and School System. We understand the importance of these programs but strongly feel that the Therapeutic Recreation is an essential service to this underserved community.

The Activity Guide offers many opportunities to learn and have fun for all age groups and does offer inclusion companions to individuals with developmental disabilities to be included in activities and this works well for young children but not for adults. Typical adults in this age range are busy with their own families and do not need assistance to go out and socialize or be in the community, they already are. The adult developmentally delayed participant wants to be with their friends who they went to school with and who they know just like everyone else.

Many of the individuals in the Saturday group are young adults and want and deserve to have the same experiences as their peers. They do not want their parents around and parents need and want to not be around for an evening too!

The benefits include providing a way for individuals who would be isolated to go out with friends thus reducing depression and problems with behavior.

The programs reduce parental/caregiver stress.

Stress kills people. According to Disability Scoop, some parents of special needs individuals have high daily stress. Parents of some individuals with Autism are said to have symptoms of combat fatigue and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other psychological disturbances made worse by lack of support including lack of help from the social service agencies that should be a safety net.

Therapeutic Recreation fills a gap in the safety net that nothing else does. Therapeutic Recreation Programs are a caring safe environment for individuals to continue their development maintain friendships and go out into the community.

These programs benefit all of Howard County financially. Each six week session of the Out & About program brings financial benefit to Howard County. These groups go places. Right now, 68 participants plus staff over the course of 6 weeks go to the movies, and that means they buy tickets, sometimes they buy snacks. They go to make pottery, they go bowling, miniature golf, eat in a restaurant, and enjoy Toby's dinner Theatre and many other activities. This all supports local business. If they did not go with this group they would not be going at all, so that is 68 less people purchasing dinner or a movie in Howard County each week. Therapeutic Recreation especially Out & About is good for business in Howard County.

This is just one Therapeutic Recreation Program at risk.

We consider all of Therapeutic Recreation to be at risk and our family members will suffer the consequences of lack of funding and being relegated to yet another waiting list.

Justine Schaeffer, a parent in our group wrote the following:

"I would like to address the critical need for increased therapeutic recreation opportunities for young adults in Howard County.

I have been a Howard County resident for 30 years; my daughter with special needs is now 24. Therapeutic Recreation is absolutely essential in my daughter's life. She doesn't have other options for socializing or recreation. My other children (also young adults) make their own fun; not so with my youngest, with special needs and the rest of this population. Our children don't drive and they need a little bit of supervision. But their need for healthy recreation is just as great as it is for other populations.

Therapeutic Recreation, especially Out and About, is where she meets her friends for a movie, dinner out, putt putt golf, pottery painting, or the newest play at Toby's. Out and About provides a supervised social time in the community for young adults with special needs. It fills a crucial need in her life for social interaction with her friends. The last thing she wants (just like my other kids) is to stay at home with her (admittedly) tired and boring parents. Does this sound familiar? It's a very typical need for young adults, and Rec and Parks is the only game in town for our young adults with special needs.

My daughter also participates in the special needs theatre troupe, No Boundaries, also an offering of the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks. She was wait listed this year for a time, which

devastated her. You cannot believe how she looks forward to the weekly practices, and suffers when we're on summer and winter holiday break. What does she want? Only to be with her friends. She's not going to be a Broadway star, but she can be a healthy, contributing member of the Howard County community. You should see what they're doing with Lion King this year!

Rec and Parks serves other populations with tons of activities—look at what's available for preschoolers. Adults. Seniors. The quarterly activity guide contains at least 100 pages with probably several thousand activities for Howard County residents. Robinson Nature Center (a \$14 million building) meets the needs of the environmental community. Yet the TR offers only a handful of offerings for any age group, and those offerings fill up quickly, leaving some of us out in the cold. Those offerings do not have the capacity to meet the need in the county, leaving many young people without the social network and experiences that keep them healthy and connected. Isn't that the purpose of a Recreation and Parks department?

And don't forget—these are TR activities that we are willing to pay for. Out and About is \$160 for 6 outings. We are not asking for a free-ride.

And don't underestimate TR's importance to parents of young adults with special needs. Most of our children are living with us, and often TR programs are the only break that we get. My husband and I have used our free time, while our daughter is at Out and About, for our own recreation—often going out to dinner, spending money in the community and enjoying time with just the 2 of us. It's precious time and vitally important to our mental health.

TR in HoCo has been excellent—we have exceptional leaders who show a remarkable understanding for our kids and provide safe supervision and a lot of fun. Led by Susan Potts who is just the best. I can say no more than that.

But please, meet the needs for that population. Eliminate the wait lists for TR programs and add more programs".

Thank you.
Justine Schaeffer

May 4, 2016
Justine Schaeffer
4209 Bright Bay Way
Ellicott City, MD 21042

As you can see Therapeutic Recreation is good for our young people, their parents, and business.

Susan Potts, Director of Therapeutic Recreation, is a fantastic program director and has fantastic staff. But if programs are cut and not funded it is demoralizing to them as well. We could lose them, as they look for better opportunities where their work is more appreciated. Losing Susan and her staff would be a tremendous loss.

Susan Potts has asked for \$20,000 to be able to expand Out & About. We think she needs more. But, we are here today before the County Council to ask for your support and further consideration of this funding request.

There is also a full time position that has been frozen this year and at present has not been funded in the next fiscal year unless you our County Council take action to remedy this issue. That position needs to be let go to be funded not frozen. This population cannot and should not endure a waiting list for Therapeutic Recreation.

Let us remember, as I speak here in Maryland more than 8000 individuals with disabilities from every county are on a waiting list for critical services from Developmental Disabilities Administration. Sadly, everyone who has services started out on a waiting list. I cannot think of another group that is systematically waitlisted the way individuals with disabilities are,

Please do not ask us to endure another waiting list.

Our group wants to ensure that these programs keep running, continue their vibrancy and ensure they are there for all! Please give us your support and fund Therapeutic Recreation.

Thank you for all you do.

Tracey Eberhardt
7812 Blue Ribbon St
Fulton, MD 20759
301-854-3525
traceyeberhardt@verizon.net

Good evening, Council members. Thank you for allowing me to talk with you this evening. I am Tracey Eberhardt, a Howard County resident for 29 years.

I am here this evening to advocate for proper funding for the Therapeutic Recreation program through the Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks. My daughter Aly is 27 years old. The only place she knows as home is Howard County. For many years, Aly has benefited from various Recreation & Parks programs. In the last several years, it has become increasingly difficult to sign her up in time to get into the programs. Even though I get online as soon as possible to sign her up, she still ends up on the waiting list at times and has been shut out of programs due to insufficient room – meaning there are not funds to hire more staff to allow more participants.

Aly has intellectual disabilities and is on the autism spectrum. She has always had difficulty with social settings. Programs such as Friday Night Out and Bowling allow her to be with her peers and enjoy social settings. She has blossomed as she has moved into young adulthood. She lives with another young woman in an apartment supported by The Arc of Howard County. She enjoys her day program at Athelas and going to work. As do we all, Aly enjoys and actually needs for her further development, social programs outside of work and home. We all enjoy going out to dinner, a movie, a concert, a play or other social activities with friends. The difference is that Aly can't just pick up and go. She is not able to drive nor is she safe being in any of these venues without supervision. I wish I could convey to you the happiness she displays when she talks about her outings. For someone like Aly, consistency is **very** important. If she does not get into one of her recreation programs, her schedule is changed, which confuses and disrupts her. She cannot understand why she cannot go out with her friends. Aly does not go to these programs for free. We pay for each program she attends as do all Howard County residents. We understand the

fees are somewhat higher than other programs, due to the support needed. Even though we pay higher fees, she still gets shut out.

Aly is only one of many adults with various disabilities in Howard County that count on having these programs available.

Please consider granting the funds requested by Susan Potts, the Director of Therapeutic Recreation at the Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks. Susan has gone above and beyond to service people with disabilities in Howard County. The County now must listen to her and support her.

Thank you for your time.
Tracey Eberhardt



10440 Little Patuxent Parkway
Suite 900
Columbia, MD 21044
PH 410-313-0239
FX 410-313-0235
info@makingchangecenter.org
www.makingchangecenter.org

Testimony to County Council
Public Hearing – Operating Budget FY2017
May 4, 2016

Good evening, my name is Mike Couch. I've lived at 10125 Century Drive in Ellicott City for 28 years. I'm here tonight as the Executive Director of MakingChange. MakingChange was founded 25 years ago but this will only be our fifth year of receiving funding through the Community Service Partnership grant program. I'm also entering my fifth year in this role and continuing to learn about the Howard County nonprofit community.

I've learned that nonprofits are held to a higher standard than for-profit businesses. We are required to produce measurable outcomes with a purpose that benefits the community. For-profit businesses are required to produce and sell enough widgets or services to exceed their expenses to generate a profit. For some businesses, just the promise of a profit is enough to generate significant investments in their business. Fortunately, as I learned as a member of the Conscious Venture Lab, there are some for-profit companies right here in Howard County, like Hungry Harvest and Shea Radiance, who are able to achieve both purpose and a profit.

At MakingChange, our mission is to empower individuals and families to achieve financial stability. Financial knowledge and skills are critical life skills that are developed beginning in childhood and must last a lifetime. Financial capability is defined as having the knowledge, skills and access to services to make informed financial decisions. It is the access to financial services – or addressing the gap in available services – where MakingChange has the greatest impact for the low- and moderate-income and vulnerable populations in Howard County.

MakingChange provides a variety of services that complement each other – financial seminars, personal financial coaching and free tax preparation. These services are most effective when they are integrated with programs at other organizations. For example, our services are offered to single moms at Howard Community College's Career Links program, homeless residents at the Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center, individuals preparing for re-entry to the community from the Department of Corrections and Head Start parents at the Community Action Council. The funding that we receive funds our financial wellness programs throughout the community in partnership with other human service agencies. Financial wellness, defined as the ability to be secure and have the freedom to make choices in both the short and long term, is just as important and challenging to maintain as physical and mental wellness.

So what are the measurable outcomes for MakingChange? We reach over 1,300 unduplicated individuals through our four main programs each year to help our clients achieve their own financial success stories:

- 1) Financial seminars provide attendees with knowledge about basic financial topics. This fiscal year we have provided 60 seminars at 22 different organizations that have been attended by nearly 600 individuals. Ninety percent of the attendees report increased knowledge from attending the seminars.
- 2) Personal financial coaching assists individuals with identifying their specific financial goals, developing a plan to achieve those goals and ongoing meetings to guide them on their journey. We partner with a variety of organizations and programs to meet with nearly 100 individuals each year. Thirty-six percent of our coaching clients have achieved at least one of their financial goals while participating in our program.
- 3) Free tax preparation, through the IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance or VITA program, provides a service for households with incomes less than \$54,000 per year. We prepared 453 tax returns this year, our fourth year of hosting the VITA site at the MultiService Center, with 24 certified volunteer tax preparers. In addition to saving the cost of preparing their taxes, estimated at over \$90,000, nearly 80% of the households who electronically filed their 2015 returns received a net refund that averaged \$2,000.
- 4) Finally, MakingChange hosted the annual Money Matters Fair this year at Wilde Lake High School. We combined this event with our Youth personal finance challenge to create a financial education event for the entire family that was attended by 150 people.

We appreciate the support of the Howard County Government through the Community Service Partnership grant program. This is our largest source of funding, although it only represents approximately 28% of our total operating budget, as we work to ensure the sustainability of our nonprofit organization with diversified revenue sources. The return on investment achieved by the Howard County Government by leveraging the Community Service Partnership Grant program for ALL nonprofit organizations is significant considering that they receive the full benefit of the services provided at a fraction of the cost. I respectfully request that you continue to support the County's funding for MakingChange and the entire Community Service Partnership funding which supports the work of many human services nonprofits to address the basic needs of our residents and the programs to support self-sufficiency.

In addition, in my role as Chair of the Howard County Board to Promote Self-Sufficiency, I request your support of community initiatives which address homelessness, food insecurity and transportation issues which represent barriers to self-sufficiency. Also, as a Board member of the Association of Community Services, I request your support of the funding included in the FY17 budget for the Nonprofit Center to bring services together to build stronger individuals, stronger families and a stronger community.

Thank you for your ongoing support of MakingChange and our mission.



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013

Allan H. Kittleman
Howard County Executive
akittleman@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051
TDD 410-313-2323

April 22, 2016

Mr. Michael Couch
Executive Director
makingCHANGE
9900 Washington Blvd., Suite I
Laurel, MD 20723

Dear Mr. Couch:

The proposed FY17 Budget that I submitted to the County Council this week includes **\$7,031,454** in funding for the Community Service Partnership (CSP) program. This reflects my commitment to supporting the critical work done by our many human service nonprofits to address the basic needs of our residents and promote self-sufficiency.

The FY17 budget categories reflect the CSP Operating grants by service category (Food/Shelter, Crisis Intervention, Health, Access/Advocacy/Information & Referral, Economic Stability/Opportunity, Independent Living, and Capacity Building). Based on the recommendations from the grant review process coordinated by the Department of Citizen Services, the following funding has been included for **makingCHANGE** in the FY17 Budget submitted to the County Council.

- CSP Operating Grant of **\$62,000**

*Amount requested of \$75,000
FY16 Prior Year Amount of \$49,000*

We have started a review of Community Service Partnership (CSP) grants that fund essential services and programs to determine which should receive permanent funding rather than be subject to an annual grants review process. This year grant agreements will include measures and outcomes that will be reported on throughout the year and which will be considered next year when funding decisions are made.

The CSP funding recommendations must now be approved by the County Council as part of the FY17 Budget. The County Council will hold public hearings on the Operating Budget on **Wednesday, May 4, at 7:00 pm** in the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City. If you wish to submit testimony in writing or to sign up for the public hearing, go to <http://apps.howardcountymd.gov/otestimony/>.

Please extend my appreciation to your staff, Board members, and volunteers for their continued

Email Testimonial from a MakingChange Client

From: Nicole McFadden <nicole.mcfadden@outlook.com>
To: ryenoli <ryenoli@aol.com>
Sent: Thu, Apr 21, 2016 2:27 pm
Subject: A Million Thanks

Good afternoon.

My name is Nicole Sharise McFadden. I've had the esteem pleasure of meeting Mr. Roy from the Making Change Organization when I was a student at Howard Community College. One evening, Mr. Roy came to our Getting Ahead class and spoke to us about having a secure financial future. Mr. Roy made a simple clear analogy on our finances that changed my life forever. He said, "When gas was about \$4 a gallon, now that gas prices are much lower, everyone with a car should have some extra money in their pocket, if not, where did the money go. That got my wheels spinning and to this very day they're still spinning. His Heaven sent comments got me to thinking, how I spend my money. Mr. Roy spoke briefly how eating on the go is quite expensive and most of the time we don't realize how much money is being wasted.. Because of Mr. Roy coming to our staying ahead class, I'm more mindful of my spending habits, I cook more meals at home.

Mr. Roy. explained to us that we shouldn't place the bulk of our money in a bank account, because it would take far too long to see any decent returns. During a workshop, Mr. Roy was giving us some basic tax tips. What I love and adore about Mr. Roy is his calm, kind patient demeanor. He offers a great wealth of information. He breaks things down so it's easy for us to understand. He answers all of our questions. He made me excited about the future. Through the workshops with Making Change, I've been able to identify the biggest problem financially and that problem is housing. I'm in the process of eliminating the situation once and for good. I may take a while, but that's ok. Thanks to Mr. Roy, Ms. Michelle Green, and , Mr. Mike. I know have the confidence to tackle my housing situation and work on saving up for my first home. Anyone who Mr. Roy allows to read this letter is more than welcome. Have a blessed day. Thank you Mr. Roy, Ms. Michelle Green and Mr. Mike for changing not only my life as my families. I encourage everyone I can to attend a Making Change Workshop.

Sincerely

Nicole (Nikki) McFadden

Meg Boyd, Executive Director
Howard County Conservancy

410-465-8877

Good evening, my name is Meg Boyd and I am Executive Director of the Howard County Conservancy. I am testifying in support of the proposed budget, which includes a match to a state bond for the expansion of our environmental education center. With me tonight supporting this project are Craig Engelhaupt, Charlie Miller, Mina Hilsenrath, Kimberly Bronow and Randy Sergent from our Board of Directors.

The Conservancy celebrated our 25th anniversary last year. We built Howard County's first environmental education center 10 years ago. Since the education center was built we have seen exponential growth in our school programs and public programs.

- Our school programs have more than tripled to 23,000 student interactions at 169 school programs last year alone.
- Our public programs have grown by 230%
- The corresponding increase in staff has been from 2.5 FTE to 10 FTE.
- We have quite simply outgrown our space.
- This expansion will more than double our environmental education space and increase by 50% our administrative support space.
- The expansion is focused on the visitor experience, with visitors entering directly into the new nature center. There will be a new community meeting room, volunteer work room and animal care area. We are also adding an outdoor classroom within our native plant garden. This project will allow us to accommodate larger school groups and host multiple programs at the same time.
- Howard County is unique in that most surrounding counties have a school system funded environmental education center. Howard County does not. The way that the school system delivers environmental education and meets

the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirement is through nonprofits like the Conservancy. What is unique about this arrangement is that the school system has placed a teacher onsite at the Conservancy to facilitate environmental education programs for schools. So, while most counties invest a significant amount of money each year to run a publicly funded environmental education center, in our case the county maximizes the resources of a nonprofit like the Conservancy. In order to continue to grow and provide these services to the schools and the public we need to build our capacity.

- So far, we have raised more than \$900,000 toward a \$1.8 million goal for this expansion.
- The state bond match in the County Executive's 2017 budget will put us within reach of our goal and allow us to break ground this fall.
- On the last page of the packet that was distributed you will find the architect's rendering of this exciting project.
- I ask that you support this funding for expansion of our environmental education center so that we can better serve the students and residents of Howard County.

TESTIMONY ON 2016-2017 OPERATING BUDGET

Howard County Conservancy Expansion of the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center

By Elmina J. Hilsenrath, 11248-2 Chase Street, Fulton, MD 20759

301-604-0293, mhilsenrath@verizon.net

May 4, 2016

I am here to testify in favor of the County Executive's FY 2017 operating budget allocation of \$250,000 for the much-needed expansion of the Howard County Conservancy's Gudelsky Environmental Education Center at our Mt Pleasant farm. I am a member of the Conservancy's Board for Trustees and serve on its Building Expansion Committee. For the past six years, as a volunteer naturalist, I have regularly lead groups of schoolchildren on hikes, seeing first-hand their joy as they discover the contents of our buildings and the beauty of our grounds. Meg Boyd, our Executive Director, has spoken about the growth of our school and public programs and the importance of expanding our nature center, meeting rooms, staff offices and volunteer spaces. As you consider this budget request, I would like to reflect on the many ways the Conservancy, the County and the State have worked together to achieve our three-fold mission of land preservation, environmental sustainability and nature education. Our expansion will help support all of these activities.

First, land preservation: Since its beginning more than 25 years ago, the Conservancy has brought almost 1700 acres under permanent, voluntary conservation easements; almost all of those easements are co-held with the County or the Maryland Environmental Trust. We have trained staff and volunteers who monitor these easements every year on behalf of the State and County.

Second, environmental sustainability: Although the Conservancy manages all 232 acres at our Mt Pleasant farm, the County and the State actually own portions of that land. Together we have reforested the stream valleys, planting over 10,000 trees to improve water quality and habitat. We have created new wetlands, we established some of the few meadow habitats in the County, we keep portions of the land in agricultural use, and we care for our farmstead buildings, interpreting their history for the public. With our use of solar and geothermal power, we try to be a model of energy and resource efficiency.

Third, environmental education: In association with the Howard County Public School System, each year we bring thousands of schoolchildren to the Conservancy for curriculum-based field trips or we bring the programs to them with our outreach activities. Because of our success at Mt Pleasant, the County hired the Conservancy to provide similar outdoor education experiences at Belmont Manor and Historic Park.

In these days of limited budget resources, the County must look carefully at its agenda and work with partners who will make the most effective use of County resources. The Conservancy truly understands the importance of partnering to achieve a mission – and of leveraging funds from many sources to achieve program goals that our annual budget alone cannot support.

Last year the State legislature awarded us a \$250,000 grant, which we were soon able to match with donations from corporations, foundations and individuals, including all members of our Board of Trustees. These initial funds enabled us to launch our \$1.8 million capital campaign. With that seed money, we have been able to hire an architect and a contractor. Now we are seeking funds to make our vision for the "Next 25 Years" a reality. The State has again committed \$250,000 in bond bill support and we hope the County will do the same. We are confident that the County's support will inspire our fundraising efforts and help ensure that we can start construction this fall.

We are grateful that, 10 years ago, the County contributed funding for the initial construction of the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center. We sincerely hope you will again be our partner in expanding this venture. Thank you for considering our request.

Testimony

County Council Budget Hearing

May 4, 2015 *2016*

Andrea Ingram, Executive Director
Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center, Inc.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center and share our input regarding the County budget for Fiscal Year 2017. Grassroots has an effective partnership with Howard County Government to deliver emergency services and we look forward to continuing those efforts in the coming year.

In the past few years not only have services grown, but the needs have become more intense. Members of our community, at all economic levels, are challenged by the issues of mental illness, addictions, financial stress, family conflict, and tragic loss.

To give a few examples:

- We implemented a second Mobile Crisis Team to be on duty Monday through Friday. Our annual responses jumped from 547 the prior year to 825 last year. We anticipate over 1,000 responses with the police this fiscal year.
- As the single point of entry for the Coordinated System of Homeless Services, our crisis counselors receive calls from 60 – 100 households each month that are newly homeless or about to be homeless. Our counselors attempt to resolve the crisis with the family or individual, and if not successful, refer the family to the system to obtain a case manager. A lot of very creative and intensive work occurs to divert households from homelessness. For example, we have an emergency overnight area for Crisis Staff to use for 1 – 4 nights stay for a vulnerable individual or family while we search for a safe resolution to their situation. Last year, 83 households utilized that opportunity for up to several weeks in some cases, to achieve a positive resolution.
- The County has been challenged by the extreme weather of the last three winters, frequently declaring code blue weather emergencies. Grassroots manages the program arranging motel placement or lobby stay at Grassroots for any homeless family or individual who needs it. This is in addition to the 51 beds at Grassroots, and 24 beds at the Congregation based winter shelters that we provide in partnership with the faith community.
- The Day Resource Center served over 900 individuals last year. This successful partnership with the faith community has largely been supported by contributions. In the coming year, we will be preparing for the new facility for the Center, which will also

include 35 housing units to be managed by another agency. Additional staffing will be needed to provide direct services in the new facility.

Despite the growing needs in the County, the only increase in our budget this current year was to enhance our ability to respond to funders with the ever growing reporting and documentation they require. This year we had to eliminate our special assistance fund of \$20,000 which provided small amounts of money to solve what are big problems for people in crisis. We also know that staff salaries at Grassroots continue to be at the low end of the scale for similar work throughout the region. We could not give any increases this year or the prior year, so in our FY17 grant, we have requested an increase of \$54,642 for a 2% increase for most staff and restoration of vital special assistance funds.

The Community Services Partnership Grants provide a cost effective way to deliver critical County services. The County and its residents receive the full benefit of the services we provide while providing roughly half of the funding. We also have extraordinary support from the community with over \$500,000 in contributions in addition to numerous partnerships with congregations and other agencies to provide key services.

The County Council has always generously supported the Community Services Partnership grant requests. I ask that you continue to strengthen and prioritize Howard County's commitment to those who need our help the most by approving County Executive Kittleman's proposed funding for these programs. Thank you.



Testimony to Howard County Counsel May 4, 2016
By: Ann Heavner
Executive Director, Rebuilding Together Howard County

On behalf of the board of directors, advisory board, low income homeowner clients and thousand volunteers of Rebuilding Together Howard County, I am testifying in support of the county executives' inclusion of a \$50,000 Community Service Partnership grant for Rebuilding Together. We are very excited to be included for the first time.

Organization's History:

Rebuilding Together Howard County was originally formed as Christmas in April. Christmas in April started in 1992, 24 years ago. The local Christmas in April affiliate was part of a nationwide movement to help those with low income, the elderly, disabled individuals, and veterans who were in need of home repairs. Since inception, the organization has repaired over 800 homes of low income homeowners with approximately 1,000 volunteers each year. In 2006, the name was changed to Rebuilding Together Howard County but, the mission remained the same. Currently, we are diversifying our funding and are receiving funding from State of Maryland Affordable Housing Trust Grant, Community Foundation of Howard County and Community Development Block Grant. For every dollar donated, we provide \$4 of goods and services to low income homeowners.

Mission and Goals:

Rebuilding Together Howard County's mission statement is, "Together we transform the lives of low-income homeowners by improving the safety and health of their homes and to revitalize communities." Bottom line, our goal is to provide a home that is warm, safe, and dry to low income homeowners who cannot afford to pay for needed home repairs.

Organizational Strengths:

Transitioning from a one day a year operation to a year round operation has resulted in a tremendous increase in the capacity of Rebuilding Together. To support that capacity is brain trust of talent. First, we have a stellar Advisory Board consisting of Presidents and CEO's of large regional construction companies which meets quarterly. To augment that talent, we have a 14 member working board of directors which meets monthly. The final important point to make regarding our organizational strength is our

Rebuilding Together® Howard County, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Corporation, EIN 52-1748888

The nation's largest volunteer organization preserving and revitalizing low-income houses and communities



volunteers. They provide the manpower to do the repairs which allows us to leverage funding. Following is a summary of that value:

2015: 850 volunteers x 10 hours = 8,500 + 100 hours = 8,600 x \$23.07 = \$198,402

2016: 900 volunteers x 10 hours = 9,000 + 100 hours = 9,000 x \$23.07 = \$207,630

Recent Accomplishments:

A game changing event occurred January 2015 when RTHC was chosen to participate in the National Excellence in Governance (EIG) program. Only 2 Rebuilding Together affiliates were chosen out of 166 across the country. Excellence in Governance is an elite 18 month program that consists of in-person training sessions, peer learning, coaching, technical assistance, board assessment, and a facilitated board retreat. The Rebuilding Together Howard County board of directors is actively learning characteristics of effective board governance and the board's role in improving organizational health, performance and sustainability. This is a significant achievement which has taken our board from good to great. The activities and results have put RTHC on a trajectory to success. Not to mention, upon graduation from the program, Rebuilding Together will be awarded \$10,000.

In closing, Rebuilding Together Howard County will greatly appreciate the help and financial support provided by this Community Service Partnership Grant.

Rebuilding Together Howard County
8775 Centre Park Drive #519
Columbia, Md. 21045
410-381-3338

Rebuilding Together® Howard County, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Corporation, EIN 52-1748888

The nation's largest volunteer organization preserving and revitalizing low-income houses and communities



Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc.

P. O. Box 96, Ellicott City, Maryland 21041 | 410.480.0824
patapscoheritagegreenway.org

May 4, 2016

Re: FY17 Operating Budget: Patapsco Heritage Greenway

Chairman Ball and members of the County Council:

The Patapsco Heritage Greenway thanks the County Executive for proposing in FY17, \$50,000 to support our work and match the State Heritage Grant. The Patapsco Heritage Area is one of Maryland's 13 certified Heritage Areas and the only Heritage Area in Howard County.

Last year, our first as a certified area, the County with full County Council support provided \$100,000- the full match for our Maryland State Management Grant. This year we've reduced our request by 50%. We met with the Baltimore County Executive and are aware that funding has been included in their FY17 budget. We've worked hard to identify other sources of funding towards meeting our required match.

In FY16, we completed a successful History Days event, held 17 workshops and led 1,200 volunteers donating over 4,500 volunteer hours in 25 stewardship events. We instituted a mini-grant program for Heritage Area partners including Columbia Families in Nature for events in the Patapsco Heritage Area, the Ellicott City Historic District Partnership Veterans Day Parade and the Ellicott City Arts Coalition. Organizationally we moved to an employee-based organization, changed our fiscal year, and implemented bookkeeping practices to become audit-ready for FY17. We created an Advisory Committee consisting of community leaders in arts, science, heritage, tourism and government from both Howard and Baltimore County. We also worked in partnership with over 100 organizations, churches and schools in the Heritage Area.

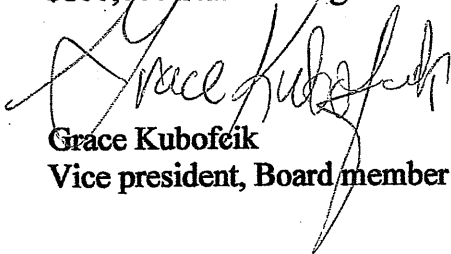
We are excited about plans for next year including; the first ever Trails Fest east of the Mississippi to be held in the Pickall Area of Patapsco Valley State Park, bringing visitors to both Howard and Baltimore County for a weekend-long festival event, and the release of Hal Sharp's second edition of "The Patapsco River Valley". We are also undertaking a strategic planning event with Councilman Weinstein and Baltimore Councilman Quirk, to identify goals to unite historic Ellicott City/Oella/Catonsville, as well as the historic towns of Elkridge and Relay.

And- since we still have a couple of months left in this fiscal year- I would like to invite you to our Annual Meeting on May 15th at 2pm at the Miller Branch library where we'll learn more about the progressive legacy of Fred Besley and the rise of professional forestry in Maryland from Dr. Geoff Buckley- Ohio University Professor and author of *America's Conservation Impulse: A Century of*

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

***Saving Trees in the Old Line State.* We'd also love to see you at our first Natural History Days- a weeklong event of programs celebrating our unique Patapsco environment beginning June 18.**

Thank you again for the critical support you gave to our organization in FY16. We urge your support for the \$50,000 included in the FY17 budget, which will help match our request for a \$100,000 State Heritage Grant in support of the Patapsco Heritage Area.



**Grace Kubofcik
Vice president, Board member Patapsco Heritage Greenway**

**CC: John Slater, President
Mary Catherine, Executive Director**

From: Mary Catherine Cochran <mcc.phg@gmail.com>
 Subject: **Re: HoCo Budget Testimony DRAFT**
 Date: May 4, 2016 12:29:30 PM EDT
 To: James Kubofcik <gracek8@verizon.net>
 Cc: John Slater <john@slaterassoc.com>
 1 Attachment, 35.3 KB

Here you go

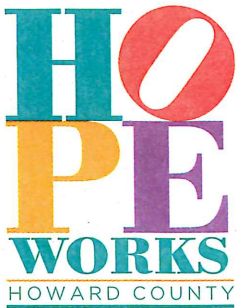
Patapsco Heritage Advisory Board FY2016

Organization	Category	County	2015 Advisory Class
Tourism			
Enjoy Baltimore County	Tourism	Baltimore	Marjorie Hampson
Visit Howard County	Tourism	Howard	Rachelina Bonacci
Parks			
Maryland State Parks (Patapsco Valley State Park)	Parks	Both	Rob Dyke
Government			
Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks	Gov	Baltimore	Pending
Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks	Gov	Howard	Dan McNamara
Historical and Heritage			
Historical Society of Baltimore County	Heritage	Baltimore	Cassie Kilroy Thompson
Howard County Historical Society	Heritage	Howard	Shawn Gladden
Conservation and Environment			
Sierra Club	Environment	Both	JoAnne Heckman
Maryland Ornithological Society- Baltimore Bird Club	Environment	Baltimore	Joan Cwi
Cultural			
Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences	Cultural	Baltimore	pending
Howard County Arts Council	Cultural	Howard	Amy Poff
Business			
Howard County Chamber of Commerce	Business	Howard	Leo McClarty
Catonsville Chamber of Commerce	Business	Baltimore	Karen Gatzke
AKRF	Business	Both	Mark Southerland
Recreation			
MORE	Recreation	Both	Dave Ferraro
Catonsville Rails to Trails	Recreation	Baltimore	Maureen Sweeney-Smith

Mary Catherine

Mary Catherine Cochran
 Executive Director, Patapsco Heritage Greenway

410 615-0425
mcc.phg@gmail.com
www.PatapscoHeritageGreenway.org



Public Hearing – Operating Budget FY 17
Testimony form HopeWorks of Howard County

May 4, 2016

Dear County Council Members,

As you know HopeWorks of Howard County is our county's only rape crisis and domestic violence center. We work to make our community safer through our comprehensive and customized client services as well as our public education and prevention work. We have been providing services for those affected by intimate partner violence since 1978 and sexual violence since 2010. Last year we served more than 3,200 people in our county who needed and requested our services.

Not only does HopeWorks provide critical services for our community members, but we also employ more than 40 people in this effort. \$1.2 million of our \$1.8 million budget goes straight to staff salaries. If you do the math, you'll acknowledge that this is a bargain for the County. We believe that no government entity or other nonprofit could provide the same quality services HopeWorks provides at the minimal cost for which we work.

We deeply appreciate the County's past recognition of the value that HopeWorks brings to our community and we ask that you reaffirm this by supporting the proposed budget for the Department of Citizen Services Partnership grants program.

In addition, we are excited about the prospect of being an anchor tenant at the new nonprofit center. This is an opportunity for us to better serve our clients who typically need more services than HopeWorks alone can provide. Being centrally located with other key service providers in the county will improve our comprehensive response to our citizens and increase our interagency collaboration thus increasing our value to the County at large.

HopeWorks will not be able to afford to take advantage of this critical opportunity if the subsidy for the nonprofit center is not approved. Therefore we also ask that you support the funding earmarked for the establishment and ongoing support for the new nonprofit center.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Pollitt Hill, MSW
Executive Director



Oakland Mills Community Association
The Other Barn • 5851 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045
410-730-4610 • oaklandmills.org

May 4, 2016

Howard County Council Members
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Council Members:

Re: RENEW HOWARD and Bridge Columbia

I am testifying on behalf of the Oakland Mills Village Board for RENEW HOWARD and Bridge Columbia.

RENEW HOWARD is a neighborhood revitalization program that will help communities with a large amount of older homes that have challenges in the form of declining property values, higher vacancy rates and declining owner-occupancy rates. This program will help meet these challenges by improving the aging housing stock. The \$2,000,000 in the budget will leverage a pool of \$20,000,000 from participating banks that will be critical in providing low-interest loans for the restoration and refurbishment of many older homes in our community and throughout the county. Please vote for RENEW HOWARD.

Bridge Columbia will be a vital link between Downtown Columbia and Oakland Mills. Given the redevelopment plans for Downtown Columbia and the multimodal path linking Howard County General Hospital and Howard Community College through Downtown over US29 through a re-invented Oakland Mills Village Center and surrounding area to Blandair Park, this project is necessary to develop an effective crossing over US29. Bridge Columbia will join the two halves of the heart of Columbia. Let's mend our broken heart. Please vote for Bridge Columbia.

Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

William R. McCormack Jr., Co-Chair
Oakland Mills Board of Directors

HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL
Testimony submitted to Howard County Council
Regarding FY2017 Proposed Budget
May 4, 2016

Good evening Chairman Ball and members of the County Council. I am Coleen West, Executive Director of the Howard County Arts Council located at 8510 High Ridge Road. On behalf of the Arts Council, I want to thank you for your past support. We appreciate all that you do on behalf of the arts and the citizens of Howard County.

The Arts Council was established in 1981 to fulfill the provisions of County Code # 12.804a. This year we are celebrating our 35th anniversary - 35 years of fostering the arts and serving the community. I am here tonight to ask you to support County Executive Allan Kittleman's proposed budget of \$776,000, which is slightly less than last year's arts appropriation.

Seventy percent of the proposed funding will be used to support 4 grant programs that provide operating and project support to county arts organizations, K-12 schools through Parent Teacher Associations, and Baltimore City arts and cultural organizations. These grants support 50-60 organizations that provide a broad range of arts and arts education programs for both children and adults. Attendance at arts events funded through these grant programs was 340,000 and volunteers for arts groups receiving grants donated 91,840 hours – a value of \$2.1 million – clear indicators that the arts are important to the citizens of Howard County.

In addition to the intrinsic value of the arts; a strong arts sector improves our quality of life and is an economic asset that stimulates business activity, attracts tourism revenue, and retains a high quality work force. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector made up 4.32 percent, or \$698.7 billion, of the nation's GDP —a larger share of the economy than construction, transportation and warehousing. The Bureau also reports arts and culture generates 4.7 million jobs and U.S. exports of arts goods (e.g., movies, paintings, jewelry) resulted in a \$25 billion arts trade surplus.¹

Local companies face a global marketplace where value is increasingly determined by technology, knowledge and ideas. A study published by the Conference Board (serving the Fortune 1000 U.S. companies), found 97% of employers say creativity and innovation skills are important in U.S. workplaces, while 85% of these employers say they can't find the creative, innovative applicants they seek.²

In an economy that is driven by creativity and innovation, we will need to attract the creative class – artists, entrepreneurs, and innovators. In order to attract - and retain them - we will not only need strong public education, safety and transportation systems, but we will have to have state-of-the-art entertainment, arts, and recreational amenities and unique live-work options that appeal to their active, 24-7 lifestyle

Howard County has positioned itself well to meet the expectations of this 21st century workforce. Ellicott City was recently named one of the “Top 20 Leading Creative Class Cities” by Richard Florida.³ The arts curriculum in our public schools is one of the strongest in the nation, we have a growing state-of-the-art community college, we have excellent recreational facilities and libraries, we have a vision for a vibrant arts, retail and entertainment district in Downtown Columbia, and we are home to over 792 arts-related businesses that employ 2693 people in the County.⁴ These include major tourist attractions, such as Merriweather Post Pavilion, for-profit media and design businesses, and a vibrant network of non-profit arts groups. The arts sector accounts for 3.9% of the total businesses in the County and 1.6% of the people they employ.

Howard County is a special place that has developed a strong community for the arts. To illustrate this point, a 2015 study by Webb Management Services⁵ found:

- Howard County has the second highest number of individual artists and creative industries per capita out of the seven Baltimore-Washington area counties.
- Howard County residents spend more per capita on arts and entertainment out of the seven metro counties.

- And, Howard County has the second highest level of arts participation per capita out of the seven metro counties.

The arts (both for- and non-profit) are an important part of the County's small business sector and the heart of the arts community are non-profit groups such as the Columbia Festival of the Arts, HoCoPoLitSo, Candlelight Concerts and others. These non-profits provide opportunities for engagement and participation, they incubate artistic ideas and enterprises, and they create distinctive experiences that attract tourists, businesses and residents alike.

While, we have a vital, diverse arts community and audience demand for their programs and services is great, the county is facility-poor.

It takes a special ecosystem to maintain a vibrant arts community on a local level – you need the talent and dedication of practicing artists, strong arts organizations, innovative arts businesses, enthusiastic audiences, policy and support from government, and contributions from businesses and individuals. In addition, you need affordable space to incubate, create, and produce the arts and you need space to present the work and engage the public.

The non-profits work year round to make the arts available to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. They do an incredible amount of work with very little resources. Even in good times, their budgets are extremely fragile. County funding provides them with a reliable source of unrestricted support that they use to underwrite their core activities and to leverage private dollars.

County investment in the arts serves the public interest by broadening public access to the arts and by fostering diverse art forms. The non-profit arts groups, in turn, give back to our community by enhancing our quality of life, attracting businesses and jobs, and generating revenue for the County. In FY15, not only did Howard County grantees provide us with exceptional programming, they used these funds to leverage \$5 million in revenues – 50% from

earned income and admissions, 25% Howard County, 9% individuals, 5% State and Federal, 4% corporations, 4% foundations, 3 % from the Columbia Association– and 177 FTE jobs.⁶

Statewide, there are 13,704 arts-related businesses that generate 47,852 jobs⁷, including 241 non-profit arts groups that generate 12,700 FTE jobs. The non-profit sector alone has a total annual impact of \$1 billion.⁸

The arts add tourism dollars to the local economy as well. Locally, 20-30% of our non-profit arts audiences are made up of people who reside outside of Howard County,⁹ these visitors come to our County and spend money at local restaurants and businesses. The Maryland State Department of Business and Economic Development reports that every \$1 of operating generates an additional \$3.94 in spending on goods and services.¹⁰ Using this formula, the non-profit arts groups in Howard County, generated an extra \$19.7 million in secondary spending to our local economy in FY15 for a total economic impact of \$24.7 million (this does not include revenue from for-profit venues such as Merriweather Post Pavilion, Toby's Dinner Theatre, movie theaters, or design, marketing and printing companies, or others that do not receive direct funding from the Arts Council).

Seventy percent of the proposed county funding will go to support 4 grant programs that provide operating and project grants to about 50 organizations and schools.

- 1) The Community Arts Development (CAD) program provides operating and project grants to local arts organizations as well as non-arts groups interested in presenting arts programs. In FY15, the Arts Council awarded \$338,031 (CAD: \$321,894, JRT: \$16,137) to 20 Howard County organizations through this grant program.
- 2) The Baltimore City Arts and Culture (BCAC) program awards grants to city organizations that have regional significance and provide considerable services to Howard County residents. In FY15, we awarded \$173,962 to 11 city organizations.
- 3) The Outreach Howard program awards grants to City grantees to produce projects IN Howard County. In FY15, \$60,000 was awarded to 8 organizations.

- 4) The Artist-in-Education (AiE) program, a partnership with the County PTAs, provides grants to place visiting artists in school classrooms to enhance student experiences and skills and meet local and state goals for arts education. In FY15, we awarded \$32,000 to 21 schools.

The CAD, BCAC, and AiE programs must be matched at least 1-to-1 by the grant recipient. The goals of the grant programs are:

- To foster excellence, diversity and vitality in arts offerings for Howard County residents.
- To broaden opportunities for Howard County audiences, artists, and arts organizations.
- To increase the availability of arts activities in Howard County. And,
- To increase awareness of arts.

All grantees are required to submit final reports, which the Arts Council uses to evaluate grant programs, to track attendance and budget figures, and to hold grantees accountable to their request. These reports show that community interest and support, in terms of participation, is very strong – 340,000 attended arts events sponsored, in part, through County funds and 91,840 volunteer hours were donated. We also provided opportunities for 6,100 artists through these grant programs.

In addition to the grants program, the proposed budget provides funds to support the Arts Council's other principle program, the 27,000 square foot multi-purpose Howard County Center for the Arts in Ellicott City. At the Center, we sponsor year-round classes, art exhibits in our galleries, and performances in the community black box theatre. We also provide low cost studios for 14 visual artists, office space for 3 resident arts groups, and meeting space for 8 volunteer run groups that participate in our Arts Advancement Program. In FY15, 35,950 people visited the Center and we provided opportunities for 4,101 artists and 3,656 students to showcase their work. Whether they take a class, view an exhibit, drop in a studio, or enjoy a

performance in the black box theatre, the Center provides rewarding experiences in the arts for people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Funds we receive from the County also support county-wide initiatives, such as, the quarterly arts calendar, ARTsites, a partnership with 12 sites throughout the County to place sculptures for one year, as well as free community-based arts activities for underserved audiences, such as our Head StART in ART program.

Head StART in ART is a model artist-in-residence program for preschoolers from low-income families that has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Maryland State Arts Council as an exemplary early childhood arts program. This program introduces 100-120 children to practicing artists and provides them with experiences and training in the arts that would otherwise not take place. Each residency is designed to provide age-appropriate activities that complement Head Start's curriculum and reinforce core life and learning skills that are needed for future success. This program is free to participants. It received the John W. Holland Service Award from the Community Action Council in 2011. Cuts to the Arts Council budget would cause us to reduce or eliminate free public programs such as this and limit free public access to the arts.

Cuts would also adversely affect the groups that receive County funding through the Arts Council's grant programs. Local treasures, such as the Columbia Orchestra, the Columbia Festival of the Arts, and HoCoPoLitSo rely on these grants to meet their day-to-day operational needs. Unrestricted funds for general operations are rare, the Arts Council is one of the only sources of such support. As mentioned earlier, the operations of the non-profit arts groups, both large and small, are extremely fragile – any further cuts to the arts budget will have a negative impact on our local arts groups, our community, and the people we serve.

In addition to their economic impact, the arts impact our daily lives in other tangible ways. Numerous independent studies from the academic, arts, business, law enforcement, medical and technology fields confirm that the arts are an effective means to address a wide variety of issues and challenges in our community such as:

1) Workforce Development

Early encouragement and training in the arts help students develop core life and social skills that lead to future success, both academically and in the work place. To quote educator, Paul Lehman, “A lot of what is taught in schools suggests that there are correct and incorrect answers – as evidenced by the use of multiple choice and true/false questions. In the real world, questions are not posed that way.” He goes on to say that the academic, business, and public sectors say today’s graduates are not prepared to keep our workforce competitive in the new global economy. This is supported by the Conference Board study cited earlier. In order to be competitive and address real-life circumstances, employers need people who can do more than check off an answer from a prepared list of options or people who have only been taught what is tested - they need people who are able to make independent, complex judgments and decisions. The arts, by their very nature, teach people to seek multiple interpretations and solutions, weigh options and think critically. They also teach us how to be more tolerant and open.

In order to attract and maintain a creative workforce, greater emphasis on the arts education and practice is needed in our schools and communities.

2) Education

The contributions the arts make to academic success are well documented, I will take this opportunity to cite two important studies. First, a report from the College Board Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, which has been tracking tests for decades, shows that students who studied the arts or music for four or more years, on average, score 100 points better on their SAT scores than students with just one-half year of arts or music.¹¹ Second, is a study from UCLA that followed a sample of 25,000 American high school students over a ten-year period. The results of this study show that students who studied the arts had higher grades, scored better on standardized tests, had lower dropout rates, and were more active in community affairs than other students. In addition, it found that students from disadvantaged families who studied the arts improved their overall school performance more rapidly than other students.¹²

While studying the arts, students hone their perceptual, analytic and interpretive skills while developing creative thinking, communications and problem-solving abilities – providing them with the critical skills needed to succeed in school and in life.

The arts also provide a common ground for understanding. They facilitate intercultural understanding and provide a common lexicon for building relationships in an increasingly diverse and global society. With the growing number of non-English speaking students enrolling in our public schools, it is important to maintain a strong arts curriculum, one that is integrated with other subjects, in order to connect with non-English speakers and bridge the cultural gap.

3) Community Health and Wellness

The arts have a positive impact on community health and wellness. Nearly one-half of the nation's healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and staff; 78 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.¹³ Physicians and therapists use visual art, music, dance, and drama to treat patients with a variety of therapeutic needs. Here, the arts are used to strengthen speech patterns, self-image, and socialization skills; they help patients overcome or reduce physical dysfunction; and music therapy, in particular, has been very successful in treating seniors with Alzheimer's Disease. The arts not only help patients cope with loss, isolation, depression, and the effects of mental and physical illnesses, but help families cope as well.

The arts provide a means for seniors to remain active and productive in the community as participants, volunteers and audience members. Controlled research by the Center on Aging found that older Americans involved in the arts demonstrated better health, fewer doctor visits, and less medication usage – saving money and improving the quality of life of seniors.¹⁴

As Howard County's special needs and senior populations grow, more programs, such as the Arts Council's Fabulous Fifty+ Players musical theatre program for older adults and the No Boundaries musical theatre program for people with developmental disabilities, will be needed to meet their needs.

4) Youth At Risk

The arts help at-risk youth. Numerous studies have found that arts education programs can help reduce dropout rates - increasing the retention and engagement rates of students and raising educational attainment levels. Participation in arts programs decreases young people's involvement in delinquent behavior, increases academic outcomes for disadvantaged children, and improves students' attitudes about themselves and their future. Studies by the U.S. Department of Justice demonstrate increased pro-social behavior among adjudicated youth involved with arts programs.¹⁵ Similarly, an evaluation of Core Arts examined the effect of arts programs on adjudicated youth in Mississippi and found that participants in this program made notable improvement in cooperation, self-control, academic performance, interpersonal skills, attitude, and incidence of disruptive or risky behavior.¹⁶

As the number of youth-related incidents continues to rise, Howard County may want to explore options to use the arts as a preventative measure or as an alternative teaching method for troubled youth or those suffering from mental health issues.

While many of us value the intrinsic impact of the arts on our lives - isn't it nice to be able to show those who are more outcome oriented how the arts contribute to our local economy and how they help solve other challenges facing the County too!!

As County leaders look for ways to improve our economy and maintain our quality of life, the arts can be – and should be - part of the solution for economic development, for academic success, for life-long learning, for community health, and for our own personal well-being.

In closing, the arts entertain, engage, and enlighten us in many different ways and on many different levels. They are a good investment with many great returns.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak with you this evening.

¹ *Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (1998-2012)*, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts, January 2015.

² *Ready To Innovate*, Conference Board, 2008, cited on www.artsusa.org/information_services/toolkit by Americans for the Arts.

³ *America's Leading Creative Class Cities in 2015*, Richard Florida. *City Lab*, The Atlantic Monthly Group, April 20, 2015.

⁴ *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2015.

⁵ *Needs Assessment For Arts Facilities*, Howard County, MD, Webb Management Services, 2015, pg 20.

⁶ Source: FY14 Howard County Arts Council Revenue Sources for the Arts, 2014.

⁷ *Creative Industries 2015: The State Report*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2015.

⁸ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, 2012.

⁹ *ArtsVision: State of the Arts in Howard County 2003*, Howard County Arts Council and Vision Howard County, 2003, page 21.

¹⁰ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, 2011.

¹¹ *2012 College-Bound Seniors: Total Group Profile Report*, The College Board, 2012.

¹² *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 76-77.

¹³ *2009 State of the Field Report: Arts in Healthcare*, Society for the Arts in Healthcare, 2009.

¹⁴ Source: Americans For the Arts, www.artsusa.org.

¹⁵ Source: Americans For The Arts, www.artsusa.org.

¹⁶ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 77-78.

Good evening. My name is Katherine Keefe and I'm the Executive Director for the Columbia Orchestra. I am here tonight to testify on behalf of the Howard County Arts Council. The Columbia Orchestra is a proud recipient of the Arts Council's Community Arts Development grant and Jim Rouse Theatre Subsidy. These grants account for 17% of the orchestra's annual operating budget. In case you aren't familiar, the Columbia Orchestra is a community orchestra with 85-100 volunteer members led by our nationally-recognized Music Director Jason Love. Thanks to the support of the Arts Council, the Orchestra is able to offer over 10,000 Howard County residents access to affordable, high-quality artistic and educational programs each year. The Arts Council's Jim Rouse Theatre Subsidy makes it possible for the Orchestra to perform a 5 concert subscription series and two popular Young People's Concerts at the Jim Rouse Theatre. The Arts Council not only provides the financial support necessary to perform in this venue, but also advocates on our behalf through its role on the JRT Governance Committee. The Jim Rouse Theatre is a 740 seat hall and is the only performance space in Howard County that is large enough to hold the entire Orchestra and our growing audience. Since 2010, attendance for our concerts at the Rouse Theatre has increased by 57%. This season, three of our five subscription concerts sold out weeks in advance. The Orchestra is proud to be part of Howard County's growing, vibrant artistic community. The Columbia Orchestra is also a resident organization of the Arts Council's home, the Howard County Center for the Arts. As a small nonprofit with only 4 part-time staff members, we benefit tremendously from affordable rent, shared administrative resources, and access to the Arts Council staff. As we enter our 39th season next year, we recognize the impact the Arts Council has had on our success. On behalf of the members, staff, and Board of Directors of the Columbia Orchestra, we thank the County Council for your past support of the Howard County Arts Council and ask for your continued support.

Howard County Arts Council Testimony

Good evening and thank you for allowing me to speak tonight in support of the Howard County Arts Council. My name is Lisa Terry and I am the proud parent of a 1st grader and 5th grader at Longfellow Elementary School and a 6th grader at Harpers Choice Middle School. I currently serve on the PTA Executive Board for both schools and have personally applied for Howard County Arts Council Artist in Education Grants to enrich the students at these schools. Longfellow Elementary is a Title One School that feeds into Harpers Choice Middle, both having a significant number of students receiving Free and Reduced Meals. While the PTAs at these schools work hard to fundraise and increase membership dues, there is not enough funding to bring cultural arts programs to our students. These grants make it possible to bring in book authors for creative writing workshops, jazz musicians that work with students to compose their own music, professional artists that allow students to create their own sculpture project, a fun environmental laser show to support Earth Day, an African drummer, a Shakespeare in Residency program, a presentation where students interact with sea creatures and many others. While Howard County Public Schools has always been a supporter of arts and music, the education grants provided by the Howard County Arts Council allow students the opportunity to gain more hands-on, intimate, artistic experiences that foster deeper creative exploration, often resulting in increased critical thinking and greater student engagement. In many cases, bringing the artists to the school is less expensive than a field trips. I ask you to please support the current funding proposed for the Howard County Arts Council. Thank you.

From Sandra Alger, Art Teacher at Longfellow Elementary

The sculpture project that Longfellow third graders participated in this year was funded by an arts council grant. Through this grant, students were able to participate in the investigation, design and construction of outdoor sculptures made with a variety of donated objects that were repurposed. This was not a project in which adults showed students how to make something. This was a project in which students explored materials, tried ways to combine them, planned ideas, and then improved on them. Students had to problem solve throughout the process, working to make the ideas that they envisioned come together. The problem solving process used in visual art is very similar to the process used in engineering. In this project, students were able to experience that process through both subject areas. In addition, they found ways to make something new and exciting out of items that were ready to be discarded. Of course, they also had the opportunity to work directly with a professional artist, and learn ways that their own creative interests might flourish in their own futures.

Statement in Support of the Howard County Arts Council

My name is Todd Olson and I am the Executive Director of the Columbia Festival of the Arts. A multi-disciplinary arts festival that presents cultural arts to Howard County community year round, including education, literature, theatre, music, dance, and film.

We could not do what we do without our support from Coleen and the Howard County Arts Council. Their Community Arts Development grant of about \$80,000 equates to about 12% of our budget, and either ends up on a stage before an audience, or in the pocket of one of our 7 full and part-time arts workers or, 300 artists.

Americans for the Arts calculates the Festival's economic impact at just over \$1.1 million, which includes money spent in restaurants and hotels.

In short, this support for us means jobs and service to the community.

For 11 years I lived in the 18th largest metropolitan area in the US (Tampa Bay) and watched how the county arts councils got whittled away through the Recession, until our County Arts Council was eliminated in 2009.

Living now in the 21st largest metropolitan area, receiving 3x what our largest gift was in Tampa Bay, you can understand how arts support here is the envy of much of the rest of the country, and contributes significantly to the artistic life of local audiences and arts workers alike.

To me this is all about QUALITY OF LIFE. Let's preserve that quality of life however we can. Thank you.

**Todd Olson
Executive Director
Columbia Festival of the Arts**

**5575 Sterrett Place, Suite 280
Columbia, MD 21044**

Testimony in support to fully fund Howard County Executive's fy17 proposed budget for the Howard County Tourism Council at \$1,118,292 as presented to the Howard County Council on

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

Good evening Council Chair Ball and members of the County Council. I am Amanda Hof, Director of Partnership & Promotion for the Howard County Tourism Council, and I reside in Allview Estates in Columbia. With me this evening is Anthony Cordo, our new Executive Director, along with the Tourism Team.

We THANK YOU for the time to testify this evening and the many years of investment in Tourism. For all of us on the Tourism Team and our Board of Directors, it is an honor to work with and for the citizens and businesses of Howard County to sway travelers from nearby and faraway for a daytrip or overnight stay.

Tonight on behalf of the 10,000 individuals employed in Howard County's Hospitality Industry, I respectfully request that you fully fund Executive Kittleman's fy17 budget for the Tourism Council at \$1,118,292. This amount is derived from fy17 performance projections of the dedicated and legislated hotel/motel tax where under Howard County Code two thirds of two percent of non-general fund monies are to be invested in Tourism plus the carry over amount from fy16 as the tax outperformed projections.

Our organization met with Executive Kittleman in March with good news about the 2015 Maryland Comptroller designated Tourism Promotion Act sales taxes. On that note the Tourism Team is delivering to you an infographic called "Tourism Works for Maryland". We are pleased to report an 8.6% increase in 2015 which is 1.4 million dollars more than the previous year. The 2015 total of Tourism Promotion Act sales taxes for Howard County is \$17.9 million dollars.

So we may continue to carry out the mission to increase, develop and promote tourism in Howard County by featuring the county's unique

location, sites, services, products and people the Howard County Tourism Council respectfully requests that \$1,118,292 be included in the budget for our organization. This amount is based on the projected fy17 tax revenues plus the carry over amount from fy16 as the tax outperformed projections.

Locally, Howard County Tourism Council has supported the Columbia Festival of the Arts, The Enchanted Forest's 60th Birthday Celebration, Howard County Arts Council's Paint It! Ellicott City, Blossoms of Hope: The Howard County Cherry Tree Project and multi-day, large scale, soccer, lacrosse and golf tournaments. Regionally, we work closely with our counterparts in, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Virginia under Capital Region USA to promote internationally. In addition, we partner with fellow Maryland county destination marketing organizations plus Visit Baltimore and Destination D.C. to attract and host tour operators, meeting planners and journalists to Howard County.

Our Team also brings tourists into the county via great public relations, media buys, social media content, promotions like Restaurant Weeks & The Great Golf Getaway, the VisitHowardCounty.com website, the award-winning Visitor + Residents Guide, the new Wedding Planner guide, the new award-winning HowardOnTap craft beer travel app, and our famous Haunted Howard County Ghost Tours.

Our Howard County Welcome Center continues to exceed expectations by welcoming over 30,000 guests from all over the world, even Wyoming.

In anticipation of your approval of our funding request we are planning additional, new Tourism initiatives, to include:

- Supporting and fully participating in Columbia's 50th Celebration to include a partnership with Columbia Association and the newly formed Downtown Columbia Partnership to open a Welcome Center in Downtown for the 50th Birthday Celebration season,
- Launching a new VisitHowardCounty.com website to better represent the destination's unique location, sites, services, products and people and give Howard County a digital advantage over nearby competing markets,

- Expanded sales and marketing efforts in the wedding and social markets,
- A new grant program to assist Howard County non-profit organizations, associations, cities and towns with the promotion or operation of tourism related events and activities,
- The creation of a new geo-cache trail in the newly certified Patapsco Valley Heritage Area,
- The creation of a brand new Agritourism guide and Farm City Celebration Calendar in partnership with Howard County Economic Development Authority,

AND

- A 35th anniversary celebration for Howard County Tourism Council.

In making this request on behalf of the 10,000 employees of Howard County's hotels, shops, restaurants, farms, museums, attractions, the arts, and parks we recognize how fortunate we are to live and work in a County with leaders who understand how a continued investment in tourism is part of the economic solution.

I now ask that our tourism friends and partners who have joined us tonight to please stand, I extend special thanks to our Howard County hotels, who generated over 4.9 million dollars in hotel tax.

So on behalf of the 10,000 folks that make their living in our tourism and hospitality industry, I want to again say thank you for your on-going investment in the Tourism Council. Your investment in our organization has a direct impact on the many locally owned small businesses and non-profits that are our marketing partners. Please know the talented and dedicated Tourism Team works to create award-winning promotions and partnerships that raise the visibility of our destination. As we always say, having fun is serious business as travelers who visit Howard County leave behind nearly 18 million in tax dollars that are reinvested to maintain our resident's Nationally recognized high quality of life. Thank you



HOWARD COUNTY
TOURISM COUNCIL
FY2017 FUNDING REQUEST

REQUEST PREPARED BY:

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Friday, January 29, 2016

The Honorable Allan Kittleman, Howard County Executive
Howard County Government
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Howard County Executive Kittleman:

The Howard County Tourism Council's team of destination marketing professionals and Board of Directors made up of tourism and hospitality industry leaders whole-heartedly congratulate you on a wonderful first year in office and to express our sincere gratitude to you, your Team and the many hard-working individuals at Howard County Government for your on-going investments that directly and indirectly impact the tourism industry.

The Howard County Tourism Council respectfully requests that \$1,050,000 be included in your proposed budget for FY2017 for our organization.

This amount of \$1,050,000 is based on the projected revenues generated by an increase to the hotel tax. Should the new revenues fall short of projections, it is our sincere hope that at least the current \$1,050,000 level of funding remain in order for us to continue our sales and marketing initiatives and operation of the Welcome Centers to directly benefit our local industry. Should the new revenues surpass projections again in FY2016, it is our wish and that of our industry partners, that those new revenues also be received by the Howard County Tourism Council in FY2018.

In making this request on behalf of the 10,000 employees of Howard County's hotels, shops, restaurants, farms, museums, attractions, the arts, and parks we recognize how fortunate we are to live and work in a County with leaders who understand how a continued investment in tourism is part of the economic solution.

And while the tourism, travel and hospitality industry all across Maryland continues to be a bright spot in the economy, we are also very cognizant of the economic challenges facing not only County government, but the many small businesses emerging from the recession within our industry that now more than ever depend on our marketing efforts. As our organization looks forward to FY2017, our partners, Howard County residents, local businesses and visitors alike will see benefits from significant initiatives that FY2016's dedicated funding afforded the Howard County Tourism Council, including:

- Complete phase 1 of a brand new VisitHowardCounty.com. This new and completely responsive website is being developed and designed in partnership with Simpleview, Inc., a leader in the tourism web design and digital marketing industry. The final product will better represent the destination's unique location, sites, services, products and

people and give Howard County a digital advantage over nearby competing markets. The final product will also allow the Tourism Team to consolidate multiple services and increase efficiency.

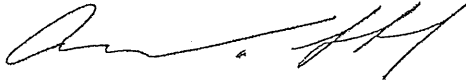
- Expanded, award-winning, one hundred and two (102) page *2016 Official Howard County Visitors + Residents Guide* (total circulation of 110,000 with 30,000 distributed at Merriweather Post Pavilion) published by Custom Media Options a Howard County based, woman owned business.
- NEW twenty-four page (24) Wedding Planner Guide for Howard County (total circulation of 96,000 with 26,000 inserted in the February/ March 2016 issue of HerMind Magazine and 50,000 inserted in the 2016 *Howard County Visitors + Residents Guide*) published again by Custom Media Options a Howard County based, woman owned business.
- NEW meeting planner guide featuring over 50 Howard County hotels and unique meeting spaces.
- NEW, award winning, HowardOnTap Howard County beer trail app for iOS that is the first of its kind in the United States and possibly the world, created in partnership with Ellicott City family owned business, TownSprout.
- Increased visitation at the Howard County Welcome Center and expanded hours at the Howard County Visitors' Center at Historic Savage Mill. The Savage Mill center is made possible by a private-public partnership and the Star-Spangled 200 grant that was awarded in 2014. Presently, we are in conversation to partner in the creation of a new Columbia Welcome Center in preparation of Columbia's 50th in 2017 and Columbia's redevelopment as premier destination in the Capital region.
- Successfully applied to the Maryland Heritage Area Authority for a matching grant to create a geo-cache trail in the newly certified Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.
- Ongoing regional efforts of our well-connected and well-respected Sales Team who support all efforts to build the foundation of aggressive, proactive regional sales activities with lead generation activity to bring new meetings, new tours, new conferences and new events to the County.
- Created publicity generating seasonal promotions previewed or reviewed by third party editorial, promoted via paid advertising (print, online, television) and expanded social media outreach that highlight, year-round, the many segments of our tourism industry that generate \$16M in tax receipts for Howard County.
- Launched NEW LocoForHoCo merchandise line and digital campaign that engages individuals online and in person at Howard County events and festivals.

Thanks to these initiatives and many others that were made possible through funding received from Howard County Government, we continue to generate national publicity, like MONEY magazine, to draw more visitors to Howard County, its signature events and attractions. These visitors live tweet, take selfies, buy locally made souvenirs and leave with wonderful memories and, in turn, leave behind tourism tax dollars (hotel, admissions / amusement, transportation, retail, food & beverage) that are reinvested to maintain Howard County's nationally recognized quality of life.

According to the newest Maryland Tourism Promotion Act Sales Taxes (the Comptroller's designated tourism taxes), Howard County increased from \$15,802,252 (FY2012) to \$16,037,307 (FY2013). This data, coupled with County tourism tax reports and with anecdotal feedback from our members, signals real economic recovery for our local tourism industry. In anticipation of your approval of our FY2017 funding request we are planning other new initiatives, outlined in the attached document, that will further enhance visitors' experiences, more aggressively market the county and add greater value to our membership.

Again Executive Kittleman, you have our sincerest gratitude. It is truly an honor and a pleasure to work alongside you and Howard County Government to benefit the citizens and businesses of our community. Should you or any member of your team have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask, we are delighted to help.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Hof', written in a cursive style.

Amanda Hof, Director of partnership & Promotion
Howard County Tourism Council

Enclosures:

FY2017 Budget Request: Howard County Tourism Council
FY2015-2016 Summary of Successes / Tourism Initiatives

Background:

- (1) Organization, What is Destination Marketing?
- (2) County & State Funding
- (3) Hotel / Motel Tax Reinvestment
- (4) Domestic Travel Impact on Maryland Counties
- (5) Tourism Board of Directors & Team List



FY2017 Budget Request:

The Howard County Tourism Council

Howard County Tourism Council has prepared the following budget allocations for FY2017:

With \$1,050,000 in Funding revenues projected from hotel tax, We will:

- Replace the vacant CEO position with an Executive Director position, fill vacant positions, create appropriate sales and marketing support staff positions and maintain Director of Partnership, Digital Marketing Manager, and Welcome Center Manager positions as well as part time Welcome Center Staff and contracted tour guides. Staffing adjustments are not expected to exceed FY2016 budgeted payroll expenses.
- Support new Director of Sales with lead generation software, tradeshow registration and travel budgets to maximize Howard County in the meetings marketplace.
- Work towards increased marketing budget efficiency by consolidating services and scrutinizing expenses. Marketing expenditures are to include paid advertising, web marketing, mobile apps creation, and printing promotional collateral materials.
- Continue our intent to apply for prestigious industry accreditation while activating three-year strategic plan so that destination is best prepared for Columbia's 50th commemorations.
- Continue Film Office efforts and offer incentives to potential film makers.
- Continue to maximize all other revenue streams from various State grants, tour operation, ticketed special events, sponsorships, cooperative marketing opportunities for promotional partners, and expanded retail operation.
- Pursue additional State and Federal grants for cooperative regional marketing.
- Fully staff renovated and enhanced Welcome Center 363 days of the year and offer seasonal programming that highlight our destination's people and places.
- Maintain the Visitors' Information Center at Historic Savage Mill during regular Mill hours.
- Create and maintain a new geo-cache trail in the newly certified Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.
- Launch a new brand new VisitHowardCounty.com website.
- Launch a new grant program to assist non-profit organizations, associations, cities and towns in Howard County with the promotion or operation of eligible events and activities.
- Continue conversation to partner in the creation of a new Columbia Welcome Center in preparation of Columbia's 50th in 2017.
- Create and execute a travel package incentive program for hotels.
- Work with Maryland State Highways Administration on implementation of updated Tourist Area and Corridor (TAC) Signing Program.
- Continue to host a holiday tree lighting ceremony with professional lighting to enhance the Welcome Center in Ellicott City and overall streetscape in historic Ellicott City.
- Expand Tourism's red pop-up tent "Welcome Center On The Go" which allows the Team to meet-and-greet visitors at major events in Howard County.
- Host HCTP's 35th anniversary celebration.



FY2015 & 2016 Summary of Successes / Tourism Initiatives

The Howard County Tourism Council, that trades as Howard County Tourism & Promotion (HCTP), our board of directors, composed of business and community leaders together with Tourism's team of marketing professionals, are moving Howard County forward as a weekend destination and smart choice for corporate travelers. HCTP works with its promotional partners, Howard County government and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development, Visit Baltimore, Destination DC, Capitol Region USA (CRUSA) and Brand USA to be an active part of increasing tourism expenditures for the benefit of the state and county and their citizens.

According to the most recent statistics for Howard County, from fiscal year 2014, the tourism industry employed 10,000, and the total direct consumer tax impact to the county totaled \$23,879,334 (up from \$22,656,411 in 2013): from the admissions and amusements taxes, \$2,812,488 (up from \$2,481,741 in 2013); room taxes, \$4,587,835 (up from \$4,404,564 in 2013); and comptroller-designated tourism promotion act sales taxes, \$13,084,658 (up 11.3% the same time frame in FY14).

Howard County is ideally located to capture primary market access from more than 25% of the population base in the nation, with excellent transportation choices by air, rail and roads. The primary market is generally described as the 200-mile radius from the geographic center of the county, but is principally within the mid-Atlantic states and District of Columbia.

Signature destination events, outdoor recreation, outdoor concerts, upscale shopping and now wellness are important to these customers. While escaping urban areas and visiting friends and family are major motivations, HCTP believes there is continued potential to convert day-trippers to weekenders by packaging events, attractions and amenities.

Unlike other destination marketing organizations, a portion of HCTP's secondary marketing effort is focused on county residents, making them aware of the many sites and events available. Howard County has been recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau as having a very high household income, with its residents being some of the most educated in the state.

Multi-Media Marketing

The media campaign for FY 2016 included more than 100 media placements (newspapers, magazines, television, online and social media). Many of these purchases were made possible by the Maryland Tourism Development Board grant program.

The media campaigns highlight Howard County's unique attractions and businesses to the niche audiences of niche publications. *AAA World*, *Southern Living* and *Preservation* magazines delivered results, with requests for the Visitor + Resident Guide from readers. Television campaigns on Comcast were developed to promote winter and summer restaurant weeks promotions, ghost tours, golf attractions and that "every season there's a reason to visit Howard

County!" Similarly Radio campaigns on CBS Radio stations and mobile platforms were developed to promote winter and summer restaurant weeks promotions, golf attractions, and holiday events. New online campaigns with TripAdvisor and ongoing campaigns on WashingtonPost.com (desktop and tablet versions) bring significant web site visitation.

HCTP entered into an agreement with Madden Media to optimize our award-winning web site's performance by purchasing Google ad words and advising our digital marketing.

HCTP also continues to ramp up its social media usage with more than 5,000 "likes" on Facebook and more than 4,000 followers on Twitter. The "Great Golf Giveaway", "Burger Bracket" and "Garden to Glass" drink social media campaigns were introduced in FY16 and yielded increased social media interactions. HCTP routinely boosts its posts, buys ads on Facebook, and is active on Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Media Relations & Film Office

HCTP placed multiple media hits at local, regional, national and international media outlets. Every major Tourism event is previewed or reviewed by the media, giving credible third-party endorsement of the activities. Of note was HCTP's guest spot News Channel 8's "Let's Talk Live". Also of note is Howard County couple, John and Virginia Frank's antique farm machinery and agricultural artifacts collection being featured on American Pickers. We are also delighted with the travel story about Howard County's many holiday attractions that appeared in the *Philadelphia Sun's* travel section after hosting their editor on a two-day tour.

These media successes are the result of HCTP's dedication to continuously craft a unique message for each event and cultivate trusting relationships with journalists and broadcasters. The public relations value of these media hits translates into thousands of dollars that did not need to be spent on advertising. HCTP is regularly quoted in local papers as an expert in tourism with a pro-business message. Its ongoing partnership with CRUSA, Visit Baltimore, Destination DC and the Maryland Office of Tourism resulted in several traditional media and blogger familiarization tour (FAM) visits and media events.

HCTP works in partnership with the Maryland Film Office and assists with location sites and other needs of filmmakers such as HGTV's "Rent or Buy". Although HBO's VEEP has relocated its production studio HCTP was recently contacted on behalf of the series to help facilitate a possible VEEP film shoot in historic Ellicott City.

Tours

Clever marketing, social shopping (Living Social & Groupon) promotions and online ticketing continues to bring successes to "Ye Haunted History of Olde Ellicott City" ghost tours (also available to the deaf community) and "Spirits of Ellicott City" (a haunted pub crawl). These and the elementary school heritage tours bring thousands of visitors to Ellicott City and Savage, who return to shop and dine. Ellicott City was named one of the spookiest towns in the U.S. by Trip-Advisor; locally, WTOP news reported this to its many radio listeners in the D.C. area.

Welcome Centers

In FY 2016, 30,000 (up 5,000 from FY2014) people stopped in the Howard County Welcome Center (from 50 states now including Wyoming, 39 countries and all three U.S. territories), located in Historic Ellicott City.

In the first half of FY 15 we kept records of how many people came through Historic Savage Mill and it was just over 800 in 6 months. We do not count people now that we've expanded accessibility to the facility, but more people can be served with the current model.

Tourism's red pop-up tent "Welcome Center On The Go" allows the team to meet-and-greet visitors at all major events in Howard County, such as the SAC Memorial Day Invitational, National High School Lacrosse Showcase, Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival and the Howard County Fair.

Group Sales/Tradeshows

HCTP participated in more appointment-style tradeshows and sales missions to grow the county's meetings business. The Maryland Office of Tourism's marketing grant funding, in addition to cooperative booth-sharing with Destination DC and Howard County hotels, allowed HCTP to stretch its marketing dollars at the U.S. Travel Association's IPW and other tradeshows. HCTP continues to invest in Cvent to enhance our sales lead generation to better connect our hoteliers with interested and qualified planners.

In October 2015 HCTP in Partnership with Turf Valley hosted the prestigious Maryland Tourism Coalition Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit. More than 200 of the state's top tourism industry professionals convened for the 35th Annual Tourism and Travel Summit sponsored by the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC) and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development (OTD). The three-day conference included education, networking and award ceremonies that recognize the best in the industry. A talented line up of speakers presented information on the latest trends in economics, marketing, and grassroots advocacy. Topics ranged from crisis communications to managing change. The news is good on the economic front too, Maryland had a banner year for tourism in 2014.

Tourism meets every other month with hoteliers and other businesses interested in group sales. The sales department sent out leads in FY2015 with 25,505 potential booked room nights and \$2,524,995 potential/booked room revenue, nearly double from FY2014. Of note, the national hotel occupancy rate for 2014 was 64.4% up slightly at 63.7% in 2013. Howard County's occupancy rate was 66%. Howard County's hotels once again outperformed projections.

Wine in the Woods and Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival packages, coupled with Elite Tournaments' Memorial Day event and the Columbia Triathlon, resulted in Howard County hotels being sold out every weekend in May.

Research

Tourism, as part of the Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, again partnered with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development to commission a comprehensive analysis by Oxford Economics. This study culled out tourism statistics on how much the average day-tripper and weekender spent per county, as well as where and how they are spending their dollars.

Product Development/Promotions

HCTP is the host organization of the successful summer and winter Restaurant Weeks; the summer promotion is co-hosted with the Howard County Economic Development Authority and the winter with the Howard County Chamber of Commerce. With nearly 30 restaurant partners, HCTP manages the culinary promotions, creates all collateral materials and directs the publicity activities for each. Ongoing seasonal promotions (via paid and earned media plus social media)

included The Great Indoors, February Bromance, March Gladness, Spring Flower Power, Summer Arts Al Fresco, Family Haycations, Girlfriend Gift Shopping Getaways and Holiday Hoopla. New this year was the Great Golf Giveaway, a month-long promotion during May of all 10 county golf attractions, from putt-putt to the pros, with weekly giveaways of foursomes, pro shop gift cards and Restaurant Association of Maryland dining cards as incentives for golfers to play multiple courses. Cooperative media placement in AAA World, Destination Maryland, the Golf channel and ESPN via Comcast, coupled with "Golf with Klug" radio buys on The Bay and significant social media push, resulted in an increase in golfers to the county. Of significance was the launch of HowardOnTap, America's first craft beer trail app and HCTP's first transition from developing award-winning traditional to digital product. HowardOnTap was named best Marketing Product of 2015 by the Maryland Tourism Coalition at the 2015 Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit.

Visitors + Residents Guide & Web Site

In January 2016 HCTP debuted its 2016 Official Visitors + Residents Guide and ALL NEW Wedding Planner booklet. The guide is bigger than ever with 102 pages and 110,000 copies being distributed. The guide features fabulous information on shopping, dining, lodging, sight-seeing, discovering and living in Howard County. Additionally, 50,000 copies of this year's guide include the Wedding Planner booklet.

Sports Marketing

HCTP takes an active role in promoting sporting events that generate significant overnight visits by out-of-state athletes. It also supports the activities of Elite Tournaments, which produces and hosts many weekend soccer tournaments in Howard County, with a two-night minimum stay for out-of-state families. It is an official partner in Team Maryland offered by Maryland Sports/ Maryland Stadium Authority, which worked NASC, one of the nation's largest sports marketing tradeshow, and S.P.O.R.T.S., letting sports event planners know that "Maryland Is Here to Play!"

Partnership

As a not-for-profit, membership-based organization 501c6, Howard County Tourism & Promotion represents over 200 promotional partners across Howard County, mostly independent businesses. Tourism continues our initiatives to provide enhanced networking opportunities for partners, including a winter and summer Restaurant Weeks, bimonthly hotel meetings, quarterly partner parties, two Legislative events in Annapolis, two mixers with the Arts Council, among others. All these initiatives provide additional incentives for partners to become paid members, and enhance not only partner benefits but raise awareness of Tourism's role in the community. In FY2016 our partnership renewals and retentions are again at 92% and a credit to the work of HCTP and especially Amanda Hof. The website area developed for our Partners details of their on-going and ever-growing cooperative marketing opportunities from co-op media placement and tradeshow, professional development. Twice a month our Partners receive a Constant Contact Enews with calls to action and FYIs. In addition to the Enews, Partners receive marketing benefits such as:

- Listing in the Official award-winning Howard County Visitor + Resident Guide.
- Listing and exclusive link on the award-winning VisitHowardCounty.com website.
- Placement of marketing materials at the official Howard County Welcome Center.
- Opportunities for discounted advertising rates.
- On-site marketing opportunities via Tourism's "On-the-Go Welcome Center."
- Cooperative tradeshow opportunities with reduced participation rates.

- Regional marketing opportunities through group sales leads and FAM tours.
- Invitations to local and regional industry networking events.
- Subscription to partnership Enews.
- Promotion in traditional media outreach and social media efforts.
- Scholarships (partial reimbursement) to Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit.
- Sponsorship (cash or media placement) opportunities of partner events.

FY 2016 TOURISM PARTNERS:

5485 Restaurant & Bar	Columbia Festival of the Arts
AIDA Bistro & Wine Bar	Columbia Gym
Alehouse Columbia	Columbia Home Tour
Alexandra's American Fusion	Columbia Horse Center
All Grain Brew Tours	Columbia Ice Rink
AllCare of Maryland Medi-Spa & Urgent Care Centers	Columbia Inn at Peralynna
AnExtraordinary Limousine, Inc.	Columbia Pro Cantare
Antique Center at Historic Savage Mill	Columbia Sports Park
Artists' Gallery, Columbia	Columbia Swim Center
Autobahn Indoor Speedway	Comcast Spotlight/Baltimore West Courtyard by Marriott Columbia
Baldwin's Station	Courtyard by Marriott Fort Meade at National Business Park
Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum: Ellicott City Station	Custom Media Options, LLC
Bare Bones Grill & Brewery	Damon Foreman Music Academy
Bean Hollow	Dead of Night Paranormal Investigation
Belmont Manor & Historic Park	Doubletree by Hilton Baltimore - BWI Airport
BEST WESTERN PLUS BWI Airport / Arundel Mills	DoubleTree by Hilton Columbia
Bistro Blanc	Downtown Columbia Partnership
Blossoms of Hope	Drama Learning Center & Red Branch Theatre Company
Bob's BMW	Edible Arrangements of Columbia, Ellicott City & Laurel
Bra-La-La	Elite Tournaments
Carroll Farm-To-Table	Elkridge Furnace Inn
Carrollton Hall	Ellicott City Arts Coalition
Centre Park Grill	Ellicott City Partnership
Chatham Station Shopping Center	Ellicott City Volunteer Fire Department
Chesapeake Shakespeare Company	Ellicott Mills Brewing Company
Circle D Farm	EllicottCity.net
Clark's Elioak Farm	Ellicott's Country Store
Clyde's of Columbia	Enterprise Rent-A-Car
Coho Grill	Envy Salon
Columbia Archives, A Service of Columbia Association	Exit Spivey Professional Realty
Columbia Art Center	Eyre Bus, Tour & Travel, Ltd.
Columbia Association	Fairway Hills Golf Club
Columbia Association's Maggie J. Brown Welcome Center	Friends of the Whipps Cemetery & Memorial Gardens, Inc.
Columbia Association's Outdoor Pools	Friendship Hot Air Balloon Co.
Columbia Athletic Club with Indoor Tennis	Frisco Taphouse
Columbia Bank	Glory Days Grill
	Gramp's Attic Books

Great Sage
Grille620
Hackers Ink / Man Cave
Hampton Inn & Suites Columbia-South
Hampton Inn Columbia - North
Haven on the Lake
Heavy Seas Beer
Hebron House
Hi Pro Productions & Media, LLC.
Hilton Garden Inn
Historic Oakland Manor
Historic Savage Mill
Historic Sykesville
Hobbit's Glen Golf Club
HoCoMoJo
Holiday Inn Columbia East-Jessup
Holiday Inn Express & Suites
Homewood Suites by Hilton Columbia
Horseshoe Casino Baltimore
HorseSpirit Arts Gallery
Houlihan's Columbia
Howard Bank
Howard Community College
Howard County Arts Council
Howard County Chamber of Commerce
Howard County Concert Orchestra
Howard County Conservancy
Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks
Howard County Fair Association
Howard County Farm - City Celebration
Howard County General Hospital - Johns Hopkins Medicine
Howard County Government
Howard County Historical Society Museum & Library
Howard County Library System
Howard County Living Farm Heritage Museum
Howard County Public School System
Howard Hospital Foundation
Indigo Ink Digital Printing, Inc.
Jailbreak Brewing Company
Johnny's Bistro on Main
Judge's Bench Pub
Kelsey's Restaurant & Catering
La Palapa Grill & Cantina
Larriland Farm
LeeLynn's Dining Room & Lounge
Linganore Winecellars
Linwood Center Boutique

Little French Market
Lost Ark Distilling Co.
Luminous Restaurant at The Westin BWI
Maggiano's Little Italy
Main Street Oriental Rugs
ManneqART
Manor Hill Brewing
Maryland Live! Casino
Maryland National Road Association
Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival
Maryland Wine Association
Mat About You Gallery
Matcha Time Cafe
Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament
Merriweather Post Pavilion
Monster Mini Golf
National Aquarium in Baltimore
Neighbor Ride
Nora's Mediterranean Restaurant
Octavo Designs
Olde Line Grill & Lounge at The Sheraton Baltimore BWI
Ooh La Lal Hair Salon & Spa
Pandora at The Mall in Columbia
Patapsco Heritage Greenway
Perspectives Art & Design
Petit Louis on the Lake
Preservation Howard County
Putting on the Ritz Catering
Quality Inn & Suites
Rams Head Tavern
Ranazul - Tapas.Wine.Bistro
Re/Max Advantage - Marshall Realty Group
Red Shedman Farm Brewery
Rep Stage
Residence Inn by Marriott
Restaurant Association of Maryland
Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours
River House Pizza Co.
Robinson Nature Center
Rocky Gorge Golf Fairway
Salon Marielle
Saval Foodservice
Seasons 52
ShadowLand Laser Adventures
Sharp's at Waterford Farm
Sheraton BWI Airport
Sheraton Columbia Town Center Hotel
Shoemaker Country
Shrine of St. Anthony

Soccer Association of Columbia
Soft Stuff Ice Cream
Sonesta ES Suites Columbia
Springhill Suites by Marriott Columbia
Spurrier's Restaurant and Bar at Holiday Inn
Columbia East-Jessup
Star-Spangled Tours
Stella Notte Restaurant
Success in Style
Supreme Sports Club
Sushi Sono Japanese Restaurant
Sweet Elizabeth Jane
Tea on the Tiber
Terrapin Adventures
Tersiguel's French Country Restaurant
That's Dancing Ballroom & Dancesport
Center
The Adventure Park at Sandy Spring
The Business Monthly
The Columbia Orchestra
The Conference Center at the Maritime
Institute
The County Cork Wine Pub
the Grille at maple lawn
THE HOTEL at Arundel Preserve
The Iron Bridge Wine Co.
The Julia Mattis Sales Team Re/Max
Professionals

The Kings Contrivance Restaurant
The Orthodox Church of St. Matthew
The Salt Sanctuary of Maryland
The Timbers at Troy Golf Course
The Wayside Inn
The Wine Bin
TLV Tree Farm
Toby's Dinner Theatre
Touche Touchet Bakery and Pastry Shoppe
Town Grill at Lisbon Citgo Auto Center
TownSprout
Turf Valley
Turf Valley Golf
Turf Valley Spa
Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults
Victoria Gastro Pub
Waterside Restaurant at the Sheraton
Columbia Town Center Hotel
Waverly Mansion
Waverly Woods Golf Club
Wegman's
Westin BWI Airport Hotel
Whitehouse Caterers at Overhills Mansion
Wilde Lake Community Association, Slayton
House
Willow Springs Golf Course
Wind River

BACKGROUND

ORGANIZATION

The Howard County Tourism Council is a not-for-profit organization (501c6) that in addition to membership dues, retail sales and guided tours, is funded largely by generous grants from Howard County Government & the Maryland Office of Commerce. According to the newest Maryland Tourism Promotion Act Sales Taxes (the Comptroller's designated tourism taxes), Howard County visitor spending increased from \$16,037,307 (FY2013) to \$16,479,011 (FY2014). Additionally 97% of Tourism businesses, are small businesses, often small family owned and operated. All in all, the Tourism industry directly and indirectly employs nearly 10,000 in Howard County.

THE HOWARD COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL, A DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION

Howard County Tourism Council, Inc. was founded 30+ years ago by local business leaders. Government funding for the creation of the Tourism Council is/was derived from a percentage of the Howard County hotel/motel tax. The Tourism Council's objectives according to the bylaws, in concert with the Howard County Government grant funding

contract, are:

- a. To promote travel to, and tourism within, Howard County, Maryland.
- b. To support the preservation and restoration of historical buildings and landmarks, festivals, museums, parks, leisure pursuits, tourists, and cultural, recreational and other activities in Howard County, Maryland.
- c. To foster and promote common business interests in tourism in Howard County, Maryland, as well as to support and assist in the improvement of business conditions in Howard County, Maryland, as they relate to the tourism trade.
- d. To compile tourism, travel and leisure pursuit data and statistics which can be utilized by political jurisdictions, governmental agencies, educational institutions, private business affected by the tourism trade, and the general public, in assessing the economic and social impacts of tourism in Howard County, Maryland.

The Howard County Tourism Council is the officially recognized "Destination Marketing Organization" for Howard County Maryland per Howard County Government and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development. Howard County Tourism represents about 200 small businesses and non-profits across the county who rely on our marketing savvy to grow their businesses. Howard County's dynamic Tourism Team includes six full-time marketing professionals and a dozen part-time Welcome Center staff and Tour Guides.

TOP 10 REASONS DESTINATION MARKETING WORKS

Official destination marketing organizations (DMOs), like the Howard County Tourism Council, also known as convention and visitor bureaus or tourism boards, are in the business of inspiring people throughout the world to travel to the community they represent. Every day, they leverage their passion and knowledge of their destination to attract visitors and events to town in order to deliver amazing experiences for travelers, create sales for local businesses, support local jobs for residents and support the tax base for local government. How exactly is this vibrant industry harnessing its destinations' local passion to drive global impact?

1. World Leaders Take Note:

For the first time in history, the G20 world leaders recognized travel and tourism as a driver for job creation, economic growth and poverty reduction. Their declaration committed them to working towards developing travel facilitation initiatives in support of travel and its growth.

2. The United States Organizes a Unified Voice:

For the first time in history, the U.S. has a united travel and tourism strategy – and a national tourism board in the launch of Brand USA (now the largest DMO in the U.S.). According to very early results from their first campaign, the coordinated effort is already paying off; in the United Kingdom, the percentage of those who intend to visit has grown 12% since the campaign began and in Japan that percentage has grown nearly 14%.

3. The Bold Position of Travel & Tourism:

Travel and tourism contributes 1 in 12 jobs on the planet, equaling 260 million jobs globally. These employees work for an industry that represents 9% of global GDP, which is \$6.5 trillion worldwide.

4. Travel & Tourism Creates Jobs that Can't be Outsourced:

The U.S. Labor Department data reveal that overall, the industry has been responsible for more than 7% of the economy's total job growth since early 2010. Latest figures show an average of 9,100 jobs per month were added to the travel industry since January. These 63,700 jobs are primarily in the lodging and restaurant industries – which are physically located in the communities in which they are generated – meaning local jobs for local residents.

5. U.S Meetings Generate More Jobs than the Auto Industry:

Throughout the nation and here in the Capital Region, meetings create spending in local communities and support jobs. Annually 1.8 million meetings directly support 1.7 million U.S. jobs – more than the U.S. auto industry. These meetings generated a combined \$263 billion in direct spending, and \$11.3 billion in state and local tax revenue.

6. DMOs Significantly Impact the Meetings Market:

According to a recent groundbreaking study by Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), DMOs impact 19% - that's 1 in 5 - of all U.S. group hotel room demand. A DMO's local passion pays off in their daily sales and marketing efforts to attract lucrative conventions and meetings to their community. Because of their local expertise, they are the best first point of contact for any meeting planner deciding where to hold a meeting.

7. DMOs Harness Local Passion for Local Benefit:

Destinations are at the heart of this very lucrative travel and tourism industry. People don't make a "bucket list" of websites they have to visit before they die. They travel for places and experiences around the globe, and DMOs are the curators of those. Their expert local knowledge makes them the best voice for their local community.

8. DMOs are Investment Accounts for Communities:

Their efforts deliver real dividends to local governments, businesses and residents. The new visitors they attract pump cash into local businesses and public coffers, enhance the lifestyle of residents, and importantly in this economy, create jobs.

9. DMOs Import Temporary Tax Payers:

With every new visitor they attract to a community every day, DMOs help increase the local tax base to help support important county services. Think about it this way – every new traveler that visits Howard County and spends money in local businesses including hotels, restaurants, shops and attractions is also a temporary tax payer contributing to the tax base of Howard County.

10. Destination Marketing is a Smart, Efficient Investment:

For all of the reasons listed above, the passion that destination marketing professionals bring to their communities and the power of their marketing and sales efforts are now being realized as real revenue generators. Investing in tourism marketing is one of the smartest, most efficient and immediate returns for generating new and sorely needed revenues for destinations. This has been firmly documented in many independently commissioned research studies.

COUNTY & STATE FUNDING

In FY2016, Howard County Government awarded funding in the amount of \$1,015,685 given early projections of the new hotel tax revenues to the Howard County Tourism Council "composed of business and professional persons in the travel and tour industry dedicated to promoting Howard County as a travel destination." Additionally \$60,115 in under-disbursement from FY16 was carried over amounting to a total of \$1,075,800 in FY16.

Additionally in FY2016, the Howard County Tourism Council is eligible for a County Cooperative Marketing Grant under the guidelines established by the Maryland Tourism Development Board (MTDB.) The MTDB awarded funding in the amount of approximately \$106,364 (a slight increase over the approximately \$100,000.00 in FY2015) to Howard County Tourism Council for use specifically in the marketing of our county through discounted advertising placements and industry tradeshow participation. This increase is due to the 2008 Tourism Promotion Act that guarantees by legislation funding to the county DMOs from the State. The grant funding, the amount unknown until the second quarter, is performance based and reimbursed at 50%. Therefore, the Howard County Tourism Council must budget to spend twice the grant amount and manage its cash-flow to await reimbursements usually in the third and fourth quarter of the fiscal year.

FUNDING FROM HOTEL TAX FOR NEW GROUP SALES INITIATIVE

As Howard County's official destination marketing organization, the Howard County Tourism Council's mission is to increase, develop and promote tourism in Howard County by featuring the county's unique location, sites, services, products and people. The present Tourism Team always goes above and beyond, volunteering in the community and lending their marketing and media relations expertise for the benefit of the county. The twenty-one members of our active Board of Directors comprised of business and community leaders, made it a FY2011 priority to successfully lobby our industry and request an increase in present hotel / motel tax from 5% to 7%. In FY2012, the new funding, and its revenues divided and dedicated, has afforded our organization a much needed external Director of Sales to more successfully lure business and leisure travelers to the county and an award-winning website and Visitor + Resident Guide.

HOWARD COUNTY – HOTEL RENTAL TAX RATE

Howard County Code

Title 20. Taxes, Charges and Fees.

Section 20.400. - State enabling law.

- (a) Howard County may impose, by law, and collect a sales or use tax on room rentals in the county for sleeping accommodations for transients.
- (b)
 - (1) The rate of the tax authorized under this section may not exceed seven percent.
 - (2) Subject to the annual County budget and appropriation process, the County shall distribute any revenue attributable to a tax rate greater than five percent imposed by the County under this subsection as follows:
 - (i) Two-thirds to the Howard County Tourism Council; and
 - (ii) One-third to the Howard County Economic Development Authority.
- (c) Howard County may adopt, by law, any procedural or enforcement provision that the County Council considers to be necessary or appropriate for administration or collection of the tax authorized under this section, including, without limitation:
 - (1) Requiring hotels in the County to:
 - (i) Collect the tax from patrons;
 - (ii) Hold the tax in trust for the County;
 - (iii) Pay the tax collected and file periodic returns with the County; and
 - (iv) File a bond or other security for payment of the tax in an amount that the County Council considers to be necessary;
 - (2) Providing a tax exemption for classes of hotels;
 - (3) Imposing interest and penalties for late payment of the tax;
 - (4) Making unpaid tax a lien against the real and personal property of the person owing the tax; and

(5) Providing for collection of the tax by distraint.
(C.B. 38, 1998; 2014, ch. 139, § 1)

Editor's note—

Code section 20.400 was enacted by Chapter 286 of the 1992 General Assembly Session and later amended by Chapter 227 of the 1994 General Assembly Session.

TOURISM, A WISE INVESTMENT OF HOTEL / MOTEL TAX

Since the mid-90's the number of Howard County hotels has increased significantly. Since its enactment in the early-90's, Howard County's hotel/motel tax revenues have grown to greater than \$4.4M per year and thankfully under both the Robey and Ulman administrations (and now hopefully the Kittleman administration), the Howard County Tourism Council's grant amount has steadily increased. As the State and County struggle annually with budgets, it is good to know that the investment made in tourism provides a healthy return to State and County coffers in addition to making Howard County, Maryland a great place to visit and live.

*10,000 employed in County's Tourism industry (135,000 in Maryland, 1 in 9 Nationally)
30,000 visitors in Welcome Center (from 50 states, 39 countries, 3 territories)
\$16M in tax receipts reinvested to maintain County's citizens' quality of life*

VISITOR SPENDING SURGES IN MARYLAND

Maryland tourists and travelers spent \$16.4 billion on travel expenses in 2014, based on the latest TSA conducted by Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics company. Tourism industry sales increased \$942 million in 2014. Growth in recreational purchases was strongest among the key tourism industries, growing 8.4 percent. The lodging industry also performed well with revenue growth of 7.6 percent. More than 60 percent of visitor spending takes place in three industries – transportation, food & beverages and lodging. Total spending increased 6.1 percent over 2013. Spending by our visitors saves every Maryland household \$1,010!

Additionally State funding for tourism promotion is a proven investment with a great return. Maryland realized \$5 in state sales tax and more than \$25 in state and local taxes for every \$1 the Maryland Office of Tourism spent on advertising. Tourism is a major generator of jobs, directly employing 140,288 Marylanders. The Maryland Office of Tourism has clearly demonstrated that they are an effective steward of the Maryland Tourism Development Board's marketing funds.

HOWARD COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fy16 HCTP Board of Directors

Officers / Executive Committee

David Balderson, President, The Wayside Inn Bed & Breakfast
Beth Ditman, Vice-President, Custom Media Options
Mike Libber, Partnership Chair, Elite Tournaments
Pete Mangione, Treasurer, Finance Chair, Turf Valley
Becky Mangus, Marketing Chair, *The Business Monthly*
Vinnie Rege, immediate past President, Howard Community College

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Valerie Barnard
Chuck Chandler, Hampton Inn and Suites Columbia/South & SpringHill Suites Columbia
Martha Clark, Clark's Elioak Farm

Gina Ellrich, Ellrich Communications
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Michele Healy, SunTrust Bank
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Tori Marriner Buscher, Victoria Gastro Pub
Erick Rochard, restaurateur
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Brock Yetso, Immediate Past President, Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults

Ex-Officio Board Members

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Mary Catherine Cochran, Patapsco Heritage Greenway
The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Maryland Senate
Al Harden, Howard County Dept. of Recreation & Parks
Terry Hasseltine, Maryland Sports
Debra Korb, Ellicott City Partnership
Barbra Nicklas, Downtown Columbia Partnership
Donna Richardson, Howard County Government
Kathy Zimmerman, Howard County Economic Development Authority
Diane Wilson, Howard County Government

Board Member Emeritus

Jean Parker, Merriweather Post Pavilion

TOURISM TEAM

Chief Executive Officer

The Howard County Tourism & Promotion (HCPT) Board of Directors announced in January 2016 that Rachelina Bonacci tendered her resignation as Chief Executive Office (CEO).

Since joining HCTP thirteen years ago, Rachelina has helped oversee the expansion of the old post office in Historic Ellicott City into Howard County's premiere Welcome Center, serving visitors from every state and around the world who visit Howard County every year. HCTP, under Bonacci's leadership, also has received numerous awards for its innovative programs, including its recent HowardOnTap app that provides a self-guided tour of local breweries, the Howard County Visitor's Guide and its interactive web site. In addition, Rachelina, with her staff, started the popular Ghost Tours in Ellicott City and Savage Mill and helped found Blossoms of Hope, bringing more than 1,800 cherry trees to beautify Howard County as well as provide funding for The Claudia Mayer/Tina Broccolino Cancer Resource Center.

HCTP has begun a nationwide search for an Executive Director. During the transition period, the organization's senior staff reports directly to HCTP Board President, David Balderson. All regular and planned, future activities are being fully executed by senior staff members. There should be no lapse in the quality service our partners have grown to expect.

Any inquiries regarding Rachelina's resignation are being directed to David Balderson, Howard County Tourism & Promotion board president, 410-461-4636.

Chief Operations Officer

Tiffany Ahalt tendered her resignation as Chief Operations Officer (COO) to Rachelina Bonacci in November 20, 2015. Tiffany joined our Tourism Team in September 2014 in the newly created role of COO and was responsible for executing the day-to-day operations and working with the Welcome Center and Marketing Teams. Howard County Tourism & Promotion is in the midst of a strategic planning process and is evaluating how or if the COO position will be filled.

Director of Sales

Taffy Rice, tendered her resignation as Director of Sales (DOS) to Rachelina Bonacci in Spring 2015. Taffy implemented strategies and tactics of the group sales effort to promote and sell Howard County, Maryland as a destination for business and leisure travel. Howard County Tourism & Promotion is in the midst of a strategic planning process which includes an immediate plan to fill the DOS position.

10 YEARS...Amanda Hof, Director of Partnership & Promotion

Amanda manages aspects of Promotional Partnership with Howard County Tourism & Promotion by attracting new Partners and retaining existing Partners through continuous delivery of partnership benefits and on-going customer care. Amanda also manages and assists in the development of Tourism promotions like Restaurant Weeks which are designed to market Howard County's attractions and amenities to new customers.

Bridget Graham, Welcome Center Manager

Bridget manages the day-to-day operation of the Center in Ellicott City (open 363 days of the year) and satellite weekend Center at Savage Mill. Her work involves the administration of the Centers including tours reservations; retail shop operations; setup for special educational, social, cultural events; planning the quarterly "infotainment;" scheduling of the popular ghost tours and heritage tours / school field trips; all staffing and attending to the needs of daily visitors in person, on the phone, via e-mail and social media.

Sarah Kurtanich, Digital Marketing Manager

Sarah strategically positions Howard County, Maryland as a preferred travel destination by actively engaging consumers through digital marketing outlets including the organization's website, social media channels, consumer eNews and other partner platforms. Sarah works with upper management on HCTP's media relations in both traditional and digital outreach.

Having FUN is Serious Business in Howard County, Maryland!

Tourism is a vital industry to Howard County's economic health and the health well being of its citizens. Tourism promotes and celebrates all that is wonderful in Howard County, its historic towns, opportunities for outdoor recreation, local dining, signature festivals and cultural happenings. Visitors and residents are encouraged to indulge in Howard County's many amenities and weekend offerings and as we say Savor It, Dream It, Imagine It! Explore It and Discover It ---This is It-- Howard County, Where Maryland Comes Together!