



A Common Community For All



County Executive Ball Presents: The Ball Bulletin



November 10, 2025

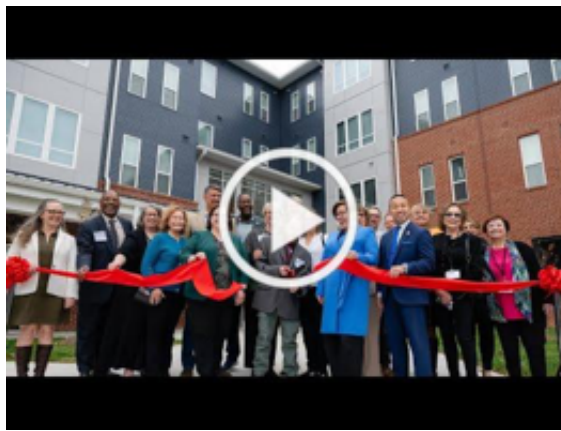
Dear Friends,

Congratulations, Howard County. Patuxent Commons in Columbia is now open! This first-of-its-kind, intentionally inclusive, mixed-income community will bring residents of all ages and abilities together. Adults with disabilities, older adults, and families will now have a place to cohabit, grow, and belong.



This project reflects our values in action. Like all great accomplishments in Howard County, it's also the product of collaboration. Thank you to Mission First Housing Group, the Autism Society of Maryland, the Howard County Housing Commission, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Disabilities, and our state and local partners who helped bring this vision to life.

Howard County was proud to back this project with more than \$6 million in County support and a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes or PILOT agreement to ensure long-term sustainability.

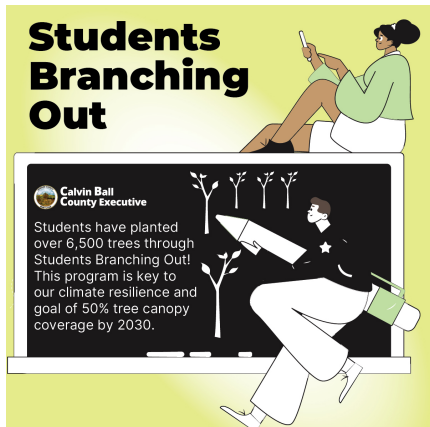


It all began with a simple idea: what if we built a place where everyone could belong? Now, that question has been answered: the Patuxent Commons. It's proof of what's possible when we work together to create housing that uplifts everyone.

Learn more at www.howardcountymd.gov/News110525b.

Sincerely,

Community Updates



Planting Trees with HCPSS

Our students are growing the future, one tree at a time. Through the Students Branching Out program, Howard County schools have planted over 6,500 trees, turning campuses into living classrooms for climate education and sustainability.

Each new tree planted contributes to our goal of achieving 50% tree canopy coverage by 2030. This is all part of the County's broader vision for preserving our environment. With nearly 150,000 trees planted across Howard County since 2019,

our next generation is helping lead the way.

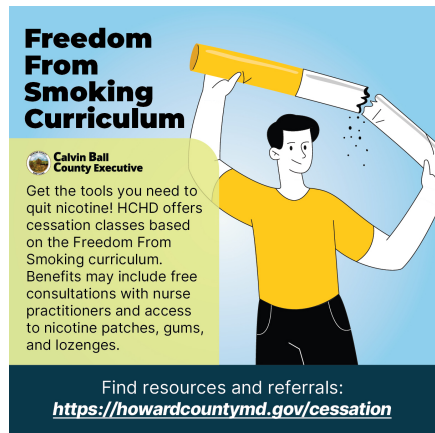
Give Nicotine the Boot

This November, our Howard County Health Department (HCHD) is stepping up support for youth and young adults ready to quit nicotine. Everyone's journey is different, so we're making help as accessible as possible.

Join our cessation classes (group or individual) built on the American Lung Association's Freedom From

Smoking curriculum. Programs may include free consultations with nurse practitioners and access to nicotine replacement therapies such as gums, patches, and lozenges.

Find the approach that works for you and get started at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/.../tobacco-use-prevention...>

A graphic titled "Freedom From Smoking Curriculum" featuring a man in a yellow shirt holding a large cigarette that is breaking apart. Text on the left says "Calvin Ball County Executive" and "Get the tools you need to quit nicotine! HCHD offers cessation classes based on the Freedom From Smoking curriculum. Benefits may include free consultations with nurse practitioners and access to nicotine patches, gums, and lozenges." At the bottom, it says "Find resources and referrals: https://howardcountymd.gov/cessation".

Freedom From Smoking Curriculum

Calvin Ball
County Executive

Get the tools you need to quit nicotine! HCHD offers cessation classes based on the Freedom From Smoking curriculum. Benefits may include free consultations with nurse practitioners and access to nicotine patches, gums, and lozenges.

Find resources and referrals:
<https://howardcountymd.gov/cessation>



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

We came together for a community-wide food drive to support the more than 21,000 residents impacted by the suspension of federal SNAP benefits during the ongoing government shutdown. Nearly 1,600 residents and County employees stopped by one of our five drop-off locations, donating more than 5,000 pounds of nonperishable food to help families put meals on the table.

These donations are being distributed to partners across our community, including the Community

Action Council of Howard County's Food Bank, the Howard County MultiService Center, Howard Community College's Fueling Dragons Pantry, Columbia Community Care, the Howard County Muslim Council, and the Indian Cultural Association of Howard County.

A special thank you to the Community Action Council of Howard County (CAC) for their continued efforts in fighting food insecurity and ensuring every resident has access to basic needs.

It's Electrifying

Howard County is the first jurisdiction in Maryland to adopt the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). This major step improves energy efficiency in new homes and buildings by nearly 8% compared to the previous standard. It positions our county as a leader in energy-independent building practices.

Alongside adopting the core IECC, Howard County added enhanced standards requiring all new homes to be "solar-ready" and "electric-ready," and new commercial buildings to be "solar-ready" and "EV charging-ready." These updates make it easier, and more affordable for residents and businesses to install effective energy solutions down the road.

A graphic titled "A first for Maryland!" featuring a sun rising over a city skyline with solar panels on a hill in the foreground. Text on the left says "Calvin Ball County Executive" and "Howard County has adopted the 2024 IECC, a major step that improves energy efficiency by nearly 8% and requires new homes to be 'solar-ready' and 'electric-ready.'".

A first for Maryland!

Calvin Ball
County Executive

Howard County has adopted the 2024 IECC, a major step that improves energy efficiency by nearly 8% and requires new homes to be "solar-ready" and "electric-ready."



Western Howard Roads to be Resurfaced

In the upcoming year, Howard County plans to resurface approximately 86 miles of roadway across Howard County with the goal of improving safety and infrastructure reliability for all.

Major roadways planned for resurfacing this fiscal year include areas of Western Howard County, including parts of Burntwoods Road, Union Chapel Road, Twelve Hills Road, Lakeside Drive, Nichols Drive, and other local streets.

During the last five years, we have invested more than \$52 million in road resurfacing across the county to enhance the quality of our transportation network for all.

Cancer Screening for Our First Responders

Early detection is key, and our new firefighter cancer screening program is already making an impact.

Through the Firefighter Innovative Cancer Screening Technologies Program, nearly 350 of our career and volunteer firefighters have participated. Almost 800 detectable cancer biomarkers, with some patients having multiple biomarkers were detected. These markers are not diagnoses, but early flags that can lead to life-saving follow-up care.

The screenings were made possible through a partnership with United Diagnostic Services, LLC and funded in part by a Maryland Department of Health grant. With strong internal support from Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services' Behavioral Health and Occupational Safety teams, we ensured every participant had access to pre- and post-screening counseling and resources.

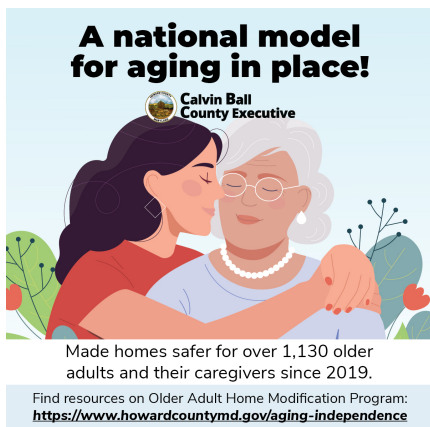
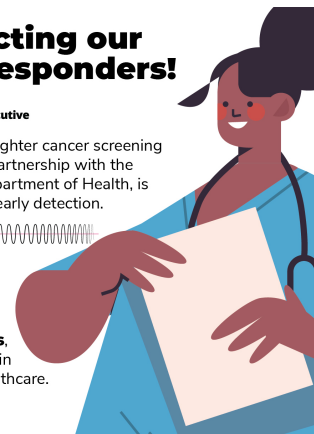
Protecting our first responders!



Our new firefighter cancer screening program, in partnership with the Maryland Department of Health, is helping with early detection.



The program found **792 biomarkers among participants**, a crucial step in proactive healthcare.



Aging in Place

Howard County's Community Living Program pairs older adults and their caregivers with occupational therapists. Together, our teams conduct safety assessments and recommend low-cost modifications such as grab bars, handrails, better lighting, and other adjustments to help reduce falls and improve mobility.

Since 2019, this powerful program has helped more than 1,130 of our older adults and 340 caregivers make their homes safer and more accessible.

Thanks to our Older Adult Home Modification Program, 18 households have also received higher-cost improvements such as stair lifts and accessible bathroom upgrades, ensuring safety doesn't depend on income.

These small changes have made a big difference in people's lives and our community. Across all households served, home safety improved by 60%, based on standardized assessments. That means fewer falls, fewer emergency calls, and more residents who feel confident and secure navigating their homes. You can explore available resources at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/aging-independence>.

Continuing a Legacy

It was an incredible honor to return to my alma mater, Morgan State University, to deliver the keynote address at this year's Founder's Day Convocation. I enjoyed seeing faculty members, students, and alumni from Howard County and beyond.



My father, a proud Morgan alum, showed me from an early age that education is not just about what we know, it's about who we become. That lesson has guided me every day, and it's one I see reflected in today's Morgan students. I was deeply honored to receive a Presidential Citation in recognition of our continuous contribution to uplift our current and next generation of leaders. I was deeply honored to receive a Presidential Citation in recognition of our continuous contribution to uplift our current and next generation of leaders.

Congratulations to all the students and faculty continuing a legacy that has defined this institution for more than 150 years. Morgan continues to grow and inspire our future leaders. Thank you to President David Wilson, and to the entire Morgan family for welcoming me home to share in this celebration. Go Bears!



Seventy-Five Years of Flight

When BWI first opened as Friendship International Airport in 1950, it was dedicated by President Harry S. Truman as a symbol of progress and connection. Seventy-five years later, it remains one of Maryland's greatest success stories. BWI links our state to the world. Today, it supports more than 100,000 jobs and generates over \$11 billion annually in economic impact.

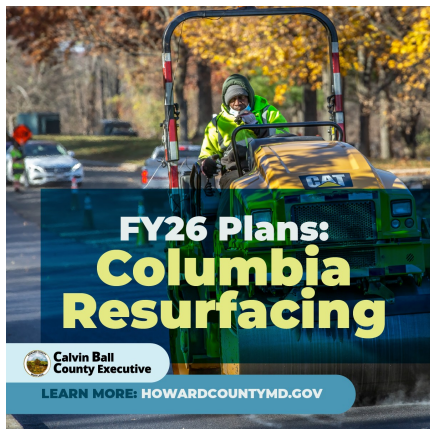
I'd like to recognize Acting Secretary of Transportation Samantha Biddle and MDOT, Executive Director Shannetta R. Griffin and the Maryland Aviation Administration, and all of our local and state partners who help make BWI the powerhouse that it is. It has stood strong for 75 years. Here's to 75 more.

Expanding Capacity

Construction is now underway on Phase 2 of the Grassroots Emergency Shelter expansion. Once

completed, this pivotal project will add 17 more beds and build on the 20 new beds created last year. Together, these two phases will increase the shelter's total capacity from 51 to 88 beds. That's an increase of more than 70% in just one year.

This transformational expansion will give us more tools to respond quickly and compassionately to families and individuals in crisis. It's another critical step on our Path Toward Zero. Learn more about our efforts to end homelessness at www.howardcountymd.gov/housing-community-development/homeless-services.



Columbia Roadway Resurfacing Forthcoming

In the upcoming year, Howard County plans to resurface approximately 86 miles of roadway across Howard County with the goal of improving safety and infrastructure reliability.

Major roadways planned for resurfacing this fiscal year include areas of Columbia, including parts of Harpers Farm Road, Suffield Court, Lightfoot Path, Hyla Brook Road, Pasture Gate Lane, Wild Flower Terrance, and surrounding streets.

During the last five years, we have made record investments with more than \$52 million in road resurfacing across the county to enhance the quality of our transportation network.

A Fireside Chat About Maintaining our Economy's Strength

We joined Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman for a fireside chat on workforce development at the Central Maryland Chamber Economic Summit in Laurel. County Executive Pittman and I discussed the talent pipelines, apprenticeships, and regional collaboration that maintain our economy's strength. It's always refreshing to learn from our neighbors and in turn, to share the lessons we've learned while we work to fortify our workforce.



Thank you to the Central Maryland Chamber, moderator Dr. Johnetta Thurston, all of the event partners, attendees, and our teams for making this a meaningful conversation.

Legal Clinics for Veterans

In honor of National Veterans and Military Families Month, we're hosting a series of free Veterans Legal Clinics to support our

**Come to our
VETERANS**



LEGAL CLINIC

EAST COLUMBIA 50+ CENTER
6600 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

NOVEMBER 10, 2025 12:00 – 2:00 pm University of Maryland School of Law, Tax Clinic 3:00 – 6:00 pm Maryland Legal Aid Estate Planning & Wills	NOVEMBER 19, 2025 4:30 – 7:30 pm University of Baltimore School of Law, Veteran's Advocacy Clinic
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 **Calvin Ball
County Executive**

county's veterans and their families.

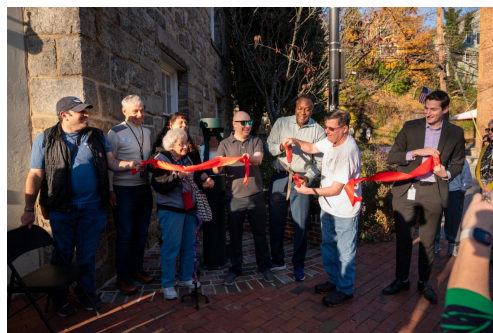
- Join us at the East Columbia 50+ Center for:
• Veterans Advocacy Clinic on Wednesday, November 19th from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., held in partnership with The University of Baltimore School of Law. During this clinic, the University of Baltimore will provide a presentation on veterans' advocacy and offer one-on-one consultations.

These clinics will offer personalized legal guidance and resources to those who have served and their loved ones.

Learn more at www.howardcountymd.gov/News110325b.

Remembering Joe

We gathered in Historic Ellicott City to honor the life and legacy of Joseph “Joe” Thoma. Known for his daily walks with his Australian Shepherds, Flynn and Olivia, Joe embodied the welcoming spirit that makes Ellicott City so special. His presence brought joy to shop owners, neighbors, and visitors alike.



In partnership with Southwest Connection, Visit Howard County, the Ellicott City Partnership, and our Department of General Services, we dedicated a new person-and-pet water fountain outside the Howard County Welcome Center in Joe's memory. May it serve as a fitting tribute to a man who cared deeply for his community and its four-legged friends.

Thank you to Lori McDermott for leading this effort and to all who helped bring this project to fruition.

 **Calvin Ball
County Executive**

**HOWARD COUNTY SCHOOLS EARN
HIGHEST AVERAGE RATINGS IN
CENTRAL MARYLAND**

October 24, 2025 THE BALTIMORE BANNER

The Howard County Public School System remains one of the highest performing school systems in the state, according to the Maryland School Report Card, the state's annual review of school quality.

The Maryland State Department of Education released its star ratings on Tuesday for the 2024-25 school year.

Schools are awarded stars based on a variety of measures, including student academic achievement, graduation rates and progress in achieving English language proficiency.



Highest Average Ratings

Howard County schools continue to set the bar for excellence in education. According to the Maryland School Report Card, our Howard County Public School System earned the highest average ratings in Central Maryland.

This year, 10 schools earned a five-star rating, with Rockburn Elementary, Pointers Run Elementary, Lime Kiln Middle, and River Hill High joining the ranks through strong gains in student achievement. In total, 97% of Howard County schools earned three stars or higher. These results reflect the hard work of our educators, students, and families who make academic excellence a shared priority across our community.

To learn more, check out this recent [*The Baltimore Banner* news story](#).

Empowering Residents

Through our Office of Workforce Development, adults with disabilities and youth with IEPs or 504 plans are gaining valuable skills and job readiness support. Combined with our new Disability Hiring Initiative, we're empowering residents with disabilities to find jobs! Together, we can support our neighbors of all abilities as they contribute their talents in supportive, accessible environment.



Growing Our Legacy

This spring, we made history. In partnership with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Howard County completed the largest voluntary tree planting in Maryland's history. We planted over 46,00 trees across 107 acres!

This record-breaking project marks a major step toward our goal of 50% tree canopy by 2030 and brings our total to nearly 150,000 trees planted since 2019. With these milestones, we're growing a legacy

of environmental leadership and local action that benefits generations to come.

Making Homes More Attainable

Through our strategic use of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements we're making homes more attainable for working families. PILOT is a financial incentive that allows for reduced tax payments in exchange for providing affordable housing, which can often be a crucial piece of the affordable housing finance puzzle.

At Legacy at Twin Rivers, this approach reduced rents on 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units by 30% below market rate. This has created 66 affordable homes for income-eligible households.

By using PILOTs strategically, we're driving private investment that directly expands affordable housing in our community.



A Statement on the Shutdown

Our federal government has been shuttered since October

November 5, 2025

Howard County Executive Ball Statement on Prolonged Federal Government Shutdown

"For 36 days, our federal government has been shuttered - the longest shutdown in our nation's history. This event has had a devastating impact across our country, our region, and our state, as families continue to face financial hardships, local businesses experience strain, and critical services are put at risk.

In Howard County, the effects of the shutdown are particularly significant as approximately 11 percent of our residents are federal employees, dedicated public servants who work tirelessly to keep our government and our nation running, with additional impacted federal contractors, who aren't getting paid. As a result of this unnecessary shutdown, many of our residents are struggling to make ends meet through no fault of their own. Their commitment and service to our nation should be honored, not politicized.

Today, I am calling upon our federal elected officials to get back to the negotiating table, put partisanship aside, and do the hard work to end this shutdown. Our federal government must reopen without delay, and all federal employees must receive retroactive pay for the time they have lost. I am grateful for the leadership of Howard County's Federal Delegation - Senator Van Hollen, Senator Alonzo, and Congressman Elfrith - for their continuous efforts to stand up for all Americans.

I commend Governor Moore for his leadership and commitment to funding \$62 million for SNAP benefits. This funding ensures that thousands of Marylanders, including the more than 21,000 Howard Countyans, can receive access to needed resources.

Our residents, our businesses, and our communities deserve better. It is time we restore stability, compassion, and responsible governance for the good of our nation."

Calvin Ball
County Executive

1st and on November 5th, it became the longest shutdown in our nation's history. This event has had a devastating impact across our country, our region, and our state, as families continue to face financial hardships, local businesses experience strain, and critical services are put at risk.

Please read my full statement at
www.howardcountymd.gov/News1105025.

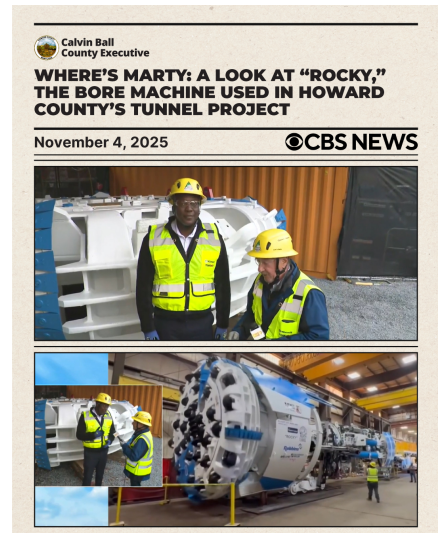
Where's Marty?

We joined Marty Bass and WJZ-TV on-site in Ellicott City to share an exciting update on our North Tunnel Project.

The cutter head for our tunnel boring machine, affectionately named "Rocky," has officially arrived. Soon, Rocky will begin carving through nearly a mile of solid granite beneath Ellicott City, helping to safely divert up to 26,000 gallons of water per second away from Main Street once complete. Construction remains on schedule, with the North Tunnel expected to be finished in 2027!

To check out WJZ-TV's recent "Where's Marty?" episode, visit

<https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/video/wheres-marty-a-look-at-rocky-the-bore-machine-used-in-howard-countys-tunnel-project/>.



Operation Green Light

This past week, Howard County proudly joined communities across Maryland in honoring the public servants who have served our nation through Operation Green Light.

As the proud son of a Vietnam-era Veteran and the grandson of a World War II Veteran, I know firsthand the courage, commitment, and sacrifice it takes to serve our country.

In tribute to our veterans, the George Howard Building will shine green through November 11th, symbolizing our gratitude and support for all who have worn our nation's uniform. Please join us in thanking our veterans and military family members for their invaluable service to our community, our county, and our country.

One of the World's Largest Gatherings

The other week, our team joined innovators, creators, and leaders from across the nation at AfroTech 2025 in Houston! AfroTech is one of the largest gatherings in the world for Black tech professionals, entrepreneurs, investors, and visionaries. AfroTech brought together more than 40,000 attendees to celebrate innovation, collaboration, and the future of entrepreneurship.



Representing Howard County and the Maryland Collective, we were proud to highlight our state as a thriving home for tech founders and diverse talent. During the conference, I had the honor of joining Jeanette Wood, Executive Director of the Faiyaz Freedom to Breathe Foundation, for a fireside chat on Brent Faiyaz's early years in Howard County and how collaboration fuels creativity, innovation, and opportunity.

We also connected with incredible Maryland partners including Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott, First Lady of Maryland Dawn Moore, Prince George's County Executive Aisha Braveboy, and leaders from Fearless, TEDCO, and the Howard County Economic Development Authority, as we showcased Maryland's growing ecosystem for entrepreneurs and tech professionals.

Thank you to Blavity Inc., the organizers of AfroTech, and to everyone who helped make this experience one to remember.



Ensuring No Family Goes Hungry

We joined Columbia Baptist Fellowship and our Office of Workforce Development at The Meeting House in Oakland Mills for a lovely food distribution event. This is the first of several efforts planned this month to ensure that no Howard County family goes hungry during these challenging times.

We're incredibly grateful for the work of Columbia Baptist Fellowship, our Office of Workforce Development, and all the volunteers and partners who continue to serve our neighbors in need. Their dedication reminds us that community is strongest when we come together to lift one another up.

If you or someone you know needs food or emergency assistance, visit www.columbiabaptistfellowship.org for upcoming distribution dates and trusted local resources.

MSU Gets Saturday Night Fever

It was a pleasure to join the Morgan State University Alumni Association Howard County Chapter for MSU Night at Toby's Dinner Theatre! As a second-generation Morgan Man, it's always great to catch up spend an evening with my fellow bears. This night at Toby's we were treated to an excellent

rendition of Saturday Night Fever.

Thank you to President Keisha Shepherd and the MSU Alumni Association for having us. As we enjoyed the show, we were also reminded of some exciting progress. Just a couple weeks ago, we saw the first concrete pour at the construction site of the future Howard County Performing Arts Center.



This project (more than 15 years in the making) fulfills our promise to carry forward the legacy of Toby's Dinner Theatre while providing a permanent home for the nonprofit Columbia Center for Theatrical Arts. We're can't wait to share more progress as it unfolds!



Supporting Our Veterans and Military Families

This past Monday, we gathered to announce new ways we're expanding support for our veterans and military families.

This November, we're launching several new initiatives to help meet the needs of our veterans right here in Howard County, including:

- Free paratransit rides to the Baltimore VA Medical Center for veterans with disabilities.
- Discounted memberships at our county recreation centers for active and retired military and their families.
- Three free Veterans Legal Clinics, offering expert help with tax issues, wills and estate planning, and veterans advocacy.

Thank you to all our partners, our Office of Veterans and Military Families, Office of Consumer Protection, Department of Recreation & Parks, Department of Community Resources and Services, University of Maryland, University of Baltimore, and Maryland Legal Aid, for helping us serve those who served us.

Learn more about the resources available at www.howardcountymd.gov/News110325.

Now Open!

We had an incredible day at Caplan's in Historic Ellicott City! Thank you to all who joined us to celebrate the grand opening of The Market at Caplan's on Main Street. It will serve as a new local goods incubator and marketplace inside one of EC's most historic landmarks.

Through our Ellicott City Safe and Sound Plan, this beloved site has been restored



and reimagined to support local artisans, small businesses, and makers from across Howard County.

Learn more about the revitalization at www.howardcountymd.gov/News103025. The Market at Caplan's is now open Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A graphic for the Truth Initiative Program. It features a yellow cigarette with a red filter and a red line representing a heartbeat. The text reads: "Truth Initiative Program", "Calvin Ball County Executive", "Howard County is supporting youth and young adults quitting nicotine! Access the Truth Initiative's EX Program for:", a bulleted list of benefits, and a link to find resources and referrals: <https://findhcreources.org/>.

- Daily motivational texts
- Progress tracking & trigger ID
- Supportive online community
- Personalized coaching from Mayo Clinic experts

The Truth Initiative

This fall, the Howard County Health Department is stepping up support for youth and young adults ready to quit nicotine. Everyone's journey is different, so we're making help as accessible as possible.

The Truth Initiative's EX Program provides:

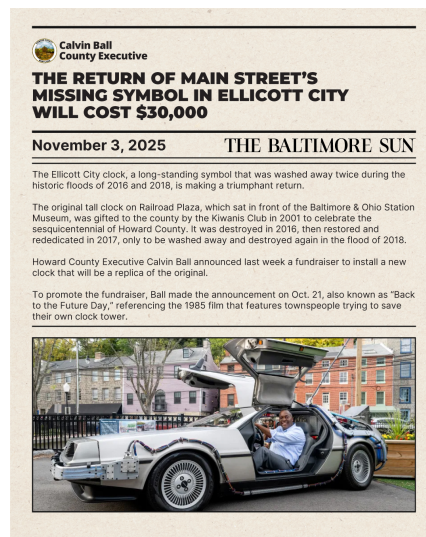
- Daily motivational text messages
- An interactive website to track progress and identify triggers
- A supportive online community sharing wins and challenges; and
- Personalized coaching and guidance from Mayo Clinic experts

Take the first step toward a nicotine-free life today at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/cessation>.

An Historic Timepiece Returns

We're thrilled to announce the return of the historic Ellicott City clock! This landmark stood proudly in front of the B&O Station Museum before being lost in the devastating floods of 2016 and 2018. Originally gifted by the Kiwanis Club in 2001 to commemorate Howard County's 150th anniversary, the clock will once again rise on Railroad Plaza. This is all thanks to a community-driven effort led by the Ellicott City Partnership. We're looking forward to bringing this cherished landmark back by spring of next year!

To learn more, check out this recent [online *The Baltimore Sun* article](#).

A snippet from a news article titled "THE RETURN OF MAIN STREET'S MISSING SYMBOL IN ELLICOTT CITY WILL COST \$30,000" by Calvin Ball, County Executive. The date is November 3, 2025, and the source is THE BALTIMORE SUN. The article describes the Ellicott City clock, a long-standing symbol that was washed away twice during historic floods of 2016 and 2018, and is making a triumphant return. It mentions that the original tall clock on Railroad Plaza, which sat in front of the Baltimore & Ohio Station Museum, was gifted to the county by the Kiwanis Club in 2001 to celebrate the sesquicentennial of Howard County. It was destroyed in 2016, then restored and rededicated in 2017, only to be washed away and destroyed again in the flood of 2018. Howard County Executive Calvin Ball announced last week a fundraiser to install a new clock that will be a replica of the original. To promote the fundraiser, Ball made the announcement on Oct. 21, also known as "Back to the Future Day," referencing the 1985 film that features townspeople trying to save their own clock tower. Below the text is a photograph of the clock tower in Ellicott City.

Calvin Ball
County Executive

**THE RETURN OF MAIN STREET'S
MISSING SYMBOL IN ELLICOTT CITY
WILL COST \$30,000**

November 3, 2025 THE BALTIMORE SUN

The Ellicott City clock, a long-standing symbol that was washed away twice during the historic floods of 2016 and 2018, is making a triumphant return.

The original tall clock on Railroad Plaza, which sat in front of the Baltimore & Ohio Station Museum, was gifted to the county by the Kiwanis Club in 2001 to celebrate the sesquicentennial of Howard County. It was destroyed in 2016, then restored and rededicated in 2017, only to be washed away and destroyed again in the flood of 2018.

Howard County Executive Calvin Ball announced last week a fundraiser to install a new clock that will be a replica of the original.

To promote the fundraiser, Ball made the announcement on Oct. 21, also known as "Back to the Future Day," referencing the 1985 film that features townspeople trying to save their own clock tower.

A Cozy Fall Pop-Up

We had a wonderful morning with ASH Interiors and Design and JARE Candles for their cozy fall pop-up at The Studio on Main Street.

Thank you to Andrea Harvey, founder of ASH Interiors and Design, and April Ryan,



Historic Ellicott City.

founder of JARE Candles, for having us. Your work illustrates how we can transform spaces through scent and design.

Events like this showcase the talent that thrives in our small business community. If you haven't yet, check out JARE Candles' new Fall Collection, and stop by 8188 Main Street to explore Andrea's stunning design studio. It is the first woman-owned brick-and-mortar design space of its kind in

Good Scout Steve

Thank you to Scouting America for having us at this year's Howard County Good Scout Award Breakfast!

Congratulations to Steve Edwards, Founder of Edwards Performance Solutions, on receiving this year's Good Scout Award for his commitment to service, leadership, and community. His example embodies the very best of Scouting's values: integrity, perseverance, and a dedication to helping others.



As a former Scout and past Good Scout Award recipient, I'm continually inspired by the work of Scouting America's Baltimore Area Council. The work you do is shaping future generations of leaders here in Howard County.

Learn more about Scouting opportunities and how to get involved at www.baltimorebsa.org.



Got a Flag?

If you are interested in buying Howard County's new flag to have on display at your home or business, we have great news! You can now buy a flag online

at <https://tinyurl.com/NewHoCoFlag> to have shipped straight to your door or purchase one in person by stopping by the Department of Finance's Cashiers Office, located on the first

floor of the George Howard Building at 3430 Court House Drive in Ellicott City, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Join us in showing off your Howard County pride, by purchasing a flag today.

For questions and/or more information, email flag@howardcountymd.gov.

Government Updates

Boards and Commissions

Professional and Public Members Sought for Board of Electrical Examiners

As I recently [announced](#), I am currently seeking licensed electricians and members of the general public interested to serve on the County's Board of Electrical Examiners. Composed of seven members, this Board is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to County elected leaders in all matters related to electrical work in the county, including the conduct of electrical business and licenses. To be eligible for consideration, applicants must be a Howard County resident, 18 years of age or older, and able to attend the Board's meetings and hearing. The deadline to apply is this Friday, November 14th.

To learn more, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/News101425.

Department of Community Resources and Services

Celebrating 50 Years

Join our Department of Community Resources and Services' (DCRS) Director Jackie Scott and her staff, as they celebrate DCRS's 50 years of excellence in providing vital human services. DCRS began as the Bureau of Citizen Services in 1975 and since then, has expanded its offerings to address the needs of multiple generations, tailored its services to encompass different cultural values, and pushed for the full inclusion for individuals with disabilities.



To mark its golden anniversary, DCRS is holding a celebration of open houses and outreach events all year long, with its next open house taking place next Monday, November 17th at its Office of Children and Families' (OCF) [Family Support Center](#) (FSC). Stop by the FSC anytime from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. to learn more about and explore its programs geared towards parents and caregivers of children age birth to five, meet its staff, and see how the center supports young families in our community.

For more anniversary events and updates, stay tuned to DCRS's website at www.howardcountymd.gov/DCRS and its social media platforms at @hococommunity.

Our Annual Caregiver Conference

I encourage all caregivers to save the date for DCRS's Office on Aging and Independence's (OAI) annual Caregiver Conference this Friday, November 14th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at our [East Columbia 50+ Center](#). At this year's conference, themed "The Pillars of Brain Health & Wellbeing," participants will explore the latest insights into brain health and overall well-being and learn from leading experts in the field, including keynote speaker Dr. William Mansbach, a renowned voice in brain health research and practice.

To attend, visit bit.ly/HoCo-CaregiverConference25 to snag your event ticket as pre-registration is required. Tickets are \$15.00 and include a buffet lunch.

For more information or questions about this year's conference, contact Kathy Wehr at 410-313-5955 or email kwehr@howardcountymd.gov.



Medicare's open enrollment period is underway, now through December 7th. If you are new to Medicare and/or looking to learn more about what plans are available to you, I encourage you to reach out DCRS's [State Health Insurance Assistance Program's](#) (SHIP) Certified Medicare Counselors at 410-313-7392 to set up an appointment. Our SHIP Counselors will help you review your current plan, discuss changes to your plan for 2026, explain the differences between Medicare Advantage and Original Medicare, and more.

Thank You Ms. Choi

Speaking of SHIP, please join me in extending a heartfelt congratulations to our longtime SHIP volunteer, Hyun Choi, who recently was inducted into the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. A volunteer with SHIP since 2012, Ms. Choi has been providing invaluable Medicare information and counseling to our county's Korean community. Thank you Ms. Choi for all you do for older adults in Howard County!



Celebrating Parents as Teachers

Through family workshops, local resources, events, educational programs, and more, DCRS's OCF supports Howard County families with opportunities to learn, grow and thrive. For instance, OCF's Parents as Teachers (PAT) team works with families to promote positive parenting, nurture early learning, and help build bright futures together. In honor of National Parents as Teachers Day, I invite you to join OCF's PAT team this Thursday, November 13th at 7:00 p.m. for its ["Ask the Parent Educator" virtual event](#). During this interactive session, participants will have an opportunity to meet virtually with PAT team members, ask questions about parenting and child development, and learn how the program can support your family! To register for this FREE virtual event, visit the County's [Active Network registration website](#) today.

To learn more about the latest happenings, workshops, activities, and programs for children and families being offered by OCF each month, [subscribe](#) to its latest [Parent Pages](#) newsletter. In each monthly issue, readers will find a full schedule of upcoming virtual workshops and in-person programs offered by FSC. OCF's ["Parent's Guide to Howard County"](#) for 2025 is also a great resource for parents, caregivers, and others looking to learn more about and find services in our community to help children grow and thrive.

If you need individual assistance, such as finding childcare, guidance with parenting issues, mental and emotional health support, special needs resources, food access, housing, and more, contact OCF's free CARE line at 410-313-CARE (2273) to learn more about what's available.



Help Us Make the Holidays Brighter

As we enter another heartwarming season of giving, DCRS's OAI is once again calling on our community to come together to show their support for older adults who may otherwise not receive a holiday gift through its "Project Holiday." From fundraising or making a monetary donation to donating items for gift bags, referring a recipient, or volunteering, there are numerous ways you, your family, friends, colleagues, and teammates can help us spread holiday cheer this season.

To learn about Project Holiday, including suggested items and a link to OAI's [Amazon Wish List](https://www.howardcountymd.gov/projectholiday), visit www.howardcountymd.gov/projectholiday. Donations of new, unwrapped gift items can be dropped off at any one of the County's 50+ centers now through Saturday, December 6th.

New Food Pantry Extended Hours

As we continue to implement initiatives and programs to help our community traverse this difficult time, I am pleased to share that DCRS has extended the hours of its [Howard County MultiService Center](https://www.howardcountymd.gov/multi-service-center) (MSC) Food Pantry this November and December. Located at 9900 Washington Boulevard, Suite I in Laurel, the MSC Food Pantry will now be open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. these next two months.

From pre-packaged "grab and go" food bags to diapers and toiletries, I encourage Howard County residents in need to stop by the MSC Food Pantry for assistance. If you are in need of food but are unable to get to the MSC Food Pantry during its operational hours, please call 410-313-0220 (voice/relay) to schedule an appointment. Additionally, if you and/or a family member have food allergies, please let our MSC Food Pantry staff know, as they will do their best to accommodate your needs.

Please keep in mind, the MSC Food Pantry service is only available to Howard County residents.

Office of Consumer Protection

SCAM ALERT: Gift Card Scams

Our Office of Consumer Protection is sharing this warning from the Federal Trade Commission about gift card scams. A favorite amongst criminals, scammers will tell their victims a range of different stories – that they're from the government, tech support, or your utility company, a friend or family member with an emergency, you've won a prize,

A flyer for the Howard County MultiService Center Food Pantry. At the top, it says "MultiService Center Food Pantry" with a logo featuring a fork, knife, and the letters "HC". Below this, it states "The Howard County MultiService Center 9900 Washington Blvd., Suite I, Laurel 20723". It then says "OPEN TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY" and "Special Food Pantry Service Hours November and December Monday - Friday • 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.". There is a section titled "Food, diapers and toiletries available." with a small image of a box of food. Below that, it says "To protect both clients and staff, food items are pre-packaged in 'grab and go' bags. Let us know if you have any food allergies, and we will do our best to accommodate your needs." At the bottom, it provides contact information: "410-313-0220 (voice/relay) mscinfo@howardcountymd.gov www.howardcountymd.gov/msc". There is also a small note about scheduling appointments and a disclaimer that the service is only available to Howard County residents.



and more, through call, text, email, or social media message to get you to buy gift cards so they can steal your money. Remember, gift cards are for gifts and only gifts, not for payments. NEVER buy a gift card because someone tells you to buy one and give them the numbers.

To learn more about this scam, visit <https://consumer.ftc.gov/node/77253>.

Department of County Administration

County Government Offices Closed for Veterans Day

Howard County Government offices, 50+ centers, animal shelter, and [local Maryland courts](#), will be closed tomorrow, November 11th in observance of the Veterans Day holiday. There will be regular Tuesday curbside trash, recycling, yard trim, and food scrap collection on the 11th and the Alpha Ridge Landfill will be open.

While [County parks](#) and the Gary J. Arthur, North Laurel, and Roger Carter Community Centers will be open on the 11th, the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex, Cedar Lane and Schooley Mill Park Activity Rooms, Kiwanis-Wallas Hall, and the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center will also be open, but only for scheduled programs. The Robinson Nature Center and County historic sites, including the Baltimore & Ohio Ellicott City Station Museum, will be closed on the 11th.

The Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) will operate on a regular weekday schedule. For more information on RTA, call 1-800-270-9553 or visit www.transitrtta.com. All parking fees and regulations will be in effect on Veterans Day.

The 9-1-1 Center and Police and Fire departments remain staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For emergencies, call 9-1-1. For non-emergencies, please call 410-313-2200.

County operations will resume on Wednesday, November 12th, at regular business hours.

Energy Saving Days

REMINDER: This Wednesday, November 12th is a Howard County Government "Energy Saving Day." On Energy Saving Days, various County employees are teleworking as several County buildings and offices are physically closed. When teleworking, County employees remain reachable by phone and email.

To learn more about the County's Energy Saving Days, including a list of what buildings/offices are physically closed, what departments and offices are effected, and contact information for those departments and offices, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/energysavingdays.

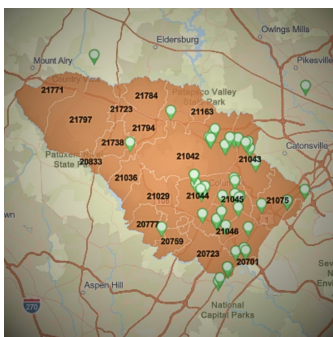
Howard County Health Department

Community Flu Vaccine Clinics

It's fall and that means it's respiratory virus season. To help, the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) is once again offering its free seasonal flu shot clinics. For a list of upcoming flu clinic dates, times and locations, visit HCHD's ["Seasonal Flu" webpage](#) today.

For the 2025–2026 flu season, HCHD will offer both the Flulaval 2025–26 Formula vaccine (recommended for ages six months and older) and the Sanofi Fluzone High-Dose 2025–2026 Formula vaccine, while supplies last (recommended for age 65 and older).

Walk-ups are accepted at all HCHD flu clinic events; no pre-registration is required.



Connecting Residents to Food

If you are struggling with food insecurity or know someone who is, please check out/share Howard County Health Department's Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition's interactive Food Connection Map at www.hclhic.org/foodmap. This map can assist users in finding nearby healthy and low-cost, accessible food, and nutrition resources in Howard County.

Office of Human Rights and Equity

Be a Community Ambassador

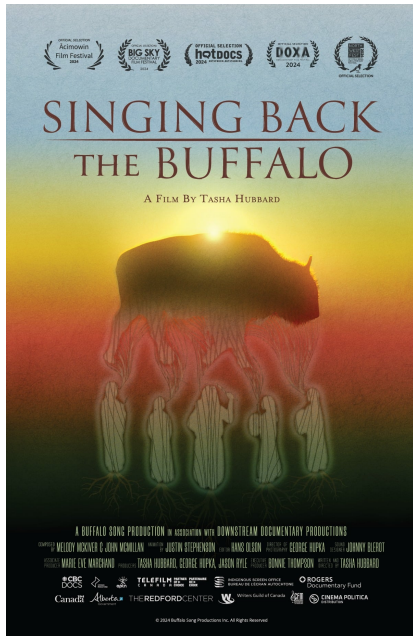
Our empowering [Community Ambassador Program](#) is a volunteer initiative aimed at equipping county residents with the tools, training, and knowledge they need to help their neighbors access vital County Government services. Since its launch in 2023, our amazing Community Ambassadors have supported and empowered hundreds of residents regarding quality-of-life issues across Howard County.



If you are motivated by service and want to make a positive impact on neighbors in our community, I encourage you to join our Community Ambassador Program next Tuesday, November 18th for its next monthly meeting starting at 6:00 p.m. at our [Elkridge 50+ Center](#). This month participants will hear from our Howard County Health Department, who will explore topics like access to healthcare services, behavioral health, emergency preparedness and response, maternal child and adolescent health, aging in place, and how it strives to make Howard County a community in which health equity and optimal wellness are accessible for all who live, work and visit. Representatives from Grassroots Crisis Intervention, who work with the County to provide free 24-hour access to behavioral health, crisis intervention, and homeless services, will also present.

To attend this FREE event, visit our ["Community Ambassador Program: Health" Eventbrite webpage](#) to register. For questions and/or more information about the

program, contact our Office of Human Rights and Equity at 410-313-6430 or email ohreoutreach@howardcountymd.gov.



Honoring Indigenous Heritage in Howard County

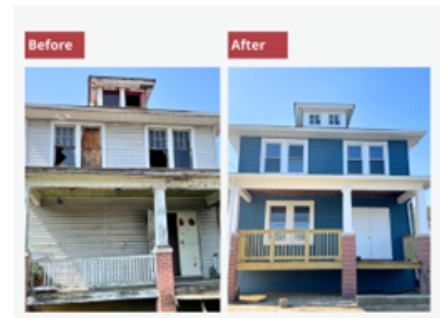
This November, in celebration of Native American Heritage Month, I invite you to join OHRE as they strive to amplify the voices and stories of our Indigenous community by hosting a screening of *Singing Back the Buffalo* next Monday, November 17th at 6:00 p.m. at our [East Columbia 50+ Center](#). Directed and produced by award-winning Cree filmmaker Tasha Hubbard, this powerful, visually stunning, and deeply moving documentary transports viewers into the buffalo consciousness. Told through the voices of Indigenous visionaries working to rematriate the buffalo to their rightful place on the Great Plains, *Singing Back the Buffalo* explores themes of Indigenous leadership, environmental justice, and the transformative power of returning to the right relationship with the land.

To reserve your FREE ticket for OHRE's viewing of this epic documentary, visit [Kinema's Singing Back the Buffalo event website](#).

Department of Planning and Zoning

Route 1 Tax Credit Program

In case you missed it, our Department of Planning and Zoning continues to accept applications for its [Route 1 Tax Credit Program](#). If you own a commercial, industrial, or mixed-use property along the Route 1 Corridor or ElkrIDGE's Main Street area, you may be eligible to receive tax credits for qualified façade and landscape improvements visible from the roadway. Eligible improvements include building façade upgrades, new signage, exterior painting and lighting, screening and landscaping, and other options.



For more information about this program, to apply and/or to hear what others have to say who have benefited from the tax credit, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/planning-zoning/route-1-tax-credit-program.

Police Department



Not Safe to Call? Text 911.

Howard County Police Department (HCPD) often says to "always call 911 in an emergency." But, if you're in any situation where it feels unsafe to make that call, did you know you can now text! This feature is available throughout the state of Maryland.

For more information about this service, check out HCPD's ["Online Resources" website](#).

Department of Public Works

Bureau of Engineering's Transportation and Special Projects Division

Old Waterloo Road Sidewalk Improvements Project Community Outreach Meeting

Our Department of Public Works' (DPW) Bureau of Engineering's Transportation and Special Projects Division will hold a community outreach meeting this Thursday, November 13th from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m., in the media center at Deep Run Elementary School, to discuss planned improvements for Old Waterloo Road in Elkridge. The proposed project includes installing a sidewalk along the west side of Old Waterloo Road from MD 108 to 6528/6534 Old Waterloo Road to complete the sidewalk connection and enhance pedestrian mobility in the area. The project also calls for the installation of storm drains and stormwater management infrastructure along Old Waterloo Road between MD 108 and Lark Brown Road to improve drainage. The project is currently in the design phase.

To learn more about this meeting, visit
www.howardcountymd.gov/News1022525c.

Bureau of Environmental Services

Leave the Leaves!

As the leaves have begun to change colors, DPW's Bureau of Environmental Services is encouraging residents to "[Leave the Leaves](#)" this fall as important insects and invertebrates depend on fallen leaves and other organic debris for their winter habitats. Of course, leaving the leaves and other plant debris doesn't mean sacrificing your yard to the wilderness. Leaves don't need to be left exactly where they fall, instead rake them into garden beds, around tree bases, or into other designated areas. Too many leaves can kill grass, but in soil they can suppress weeds, retain moisture, and boost nutrition.

Also, avoid shredding leaves with a mower. Raking or blowing (electric) are alternatives that will keep leaves whole for the best coverage and protect the insects and eggs already living there.

If in the springtime you decide you need to clean up the leaves and debris, make sure you wait until **late in the spring season** so as not to destroy all the life you've worked to protect.

Of course when leaving your leaves, make sure they are away from the roadway as they can clog the County's storm drains (causing roadway flooding) and street sweepers. Leaves that are swept down into storm drains, will eventually make their way to our Chesapeake Bay where they can add harmful nutrients to this important Maryland waterway.

Give Your Pumpkin a New Life

Once again aiming to reduce the number of pumpkins that end up as landfill waste each autumn season, DPW's Bureau of Environmental Services' annual "[Pumpkin Palooza](#)" compost collection program is back!

**SUNKEN
PUMPKIN?**



[Pumpkin Palooza](#) is now underway and continues through Friday, November 21st. During this time, residents can drop off their pumpkin(s) at the County's [Robinson Nature Center](#) in Columbia, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Wednesdays through Saturdays, and noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays, as well as at the County's [Alpha Ridge Landfill's Residents' Convenience Center](#), open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. When at the Center, residents should look for the two green 'Hungry Hippo' food scrap drop-off containers.

Howard County residents participating in the County's curbside [Feed the Green Bin](#) food scrap collection program can also simply set their pumpkins out on their regular food scrap collection day for pickup.

Additionally, the Bureau of Environmental Services has once again teamed up with the Howard County Library System (HCLS) and the University of Maryland Extension Master Gardeners to close out the season with its annual Pumpkin Palooza celebration. Set to take place on Saturday, November 22nd from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at [HCLS' Miller Branch](#) in Ellicott City, this event will feature games, composting demonstrations, food trucks, and more. Attendees can also drop off their pumpkins and jack-o'-lanterns at the event for composting.

To learn more about our Pumpkin Palooza compost collection program, including how to prepare your pumpkin for compost, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/pumpkinpalooza.

[Holiday Slide Schedule Not in Effect Next Week](#)

Despite Howard County Government offices being CLOSED tomorrow, November 11th, in observance of [Veterans Day](#) holiday, there was REGULAR Tuesday curbside trash, recycling, yard trim, and food scrap collection on the 11th and so the County's holiday slide schedule is NOT in effect next week.

To learn more about the County's holiday slide schedule and the holidays that do affect curbside collection, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/holidayschedule.

[Construction Report](#)

To learn about our DPW projects currently underway, click [HERE](#). Searchable by project category and street name, from this site you'll find additional project details, including news releases about the project. You can also contact DPW's Customer Service Office at 410-313-3440 or email publicworks@howardcountymd.gov for further assistance.

If you have questions or are interested in finding out about a State road (numbered roadway) project in your area, visit the Maryland State Highway Administration's

(SHA) [“Project Portal” website](#).

Department of Recreation and Parks



What to Do When Schools are Closed

Our Department of Recreation & Parks is here to help when schools close early or are closed all day with its School's Out programming. From science, sports, art, music, drama, chess and more, there are plenty of activities and programs to choose from to keep your kids active when school is not in session.

To learn more about what fun activities Recreation & Parks has planned now through January 2, 2026, click on the following dates: [Wednesday, November 12th](#); [Monday, November 24th](#); [Tuesday, November 25th](#); [Wednesday, November 26th](#); [Friday, November 28th](#); [Wednesday, December 24th](#); [Friday, December 26th](#); [Monday, December 29th](#); [Tuesday, December 30th](#); [Wednesday, December 31st](#); and [Friday, January 2nd](#). During the weeks of Winter Break, [full-week](#) options will also be available.

What To Do Before and After School

If you are looking for a great extracurricular activity for your child to participate in this school year, be sure to check our Recreation & Parks' before and after school programs. While many of its [next sessions](#) began last week, there is still time to register. Geared toward elementary age students, activities include science, music, drama, art, chess, soccer, basketball, track, and more.



To learn more about what activities are taking place at your child's elementary school this fall, check out our [“Recreation & Parks Before/After School Programs \(5-12 yrs\)” website](#). Also, be on the lookout for winter sessions beginning in January.



Gobble Till You Turkey Waddle

I invite you to join Recreation & Parks' North Laurel Community Center staff this Saturday, November 15th from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for its annual [Turkey Waddle](#). Geared towards children, aged two to 10, come gobble along this self-paced walk through North Laurel Park as you take part in different fitness and children's activities.

To register to participate, visit Recreation & Parks' [Active Network registration website](#); cost is \$10 for center members and \$15 for non-members.

Mistletoe at Midday Maker's Mart

Mark your calendars and kick off the holiday shopping season with Recreation & Parks' [Robinson Nature Center](#) at its annual [Mistletoe at Midday Maker's Mart](#) next Saturday, November 22nd from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Come discover handmade and sustainable wares crafted by our community's talented local artisans, while enjoying the beauty of nature that surrounds Robinson Nature Center.



Admission is FREE for Robinson Nature Center members and \$3 for non-Center members three and older; event admission does include the opportunity to explore Robinson Nature Center's amazing exhibits. Attendees are also encouraged to stop by Robinson Nature Center's gift shop during the event, where Center members will receive 15 percent off and non-Center members 10 percent off their gift shop purchase.

Finally, attendees are encouraged to bring cash as some vendors may not accept card payment and there is no ATM on site, and as on-site parking is limited, off-site parking with a complimentary shuttle will be available once the parking lot is filled.



Run and Shoot Football

Get ready to score some touchdowns this winter with Recreation & Parks' [Winter Run and Shoot Football Polar Bear League](#). Players ages 18 and older will enjoy a fast-action, low-contact version of touch football on County park synthetic turf fields.

The cost to participate is \$325 per team and the fee includes a six-game schedule, playoffs (all teams qualify), awards, field rental, and administration. Each team is required to provide color-coordinated team shirts and an official NFL-sized football.

To register your team today, be sure to visit Recreation & Parks' [Active Network website](#) before November 30th, when registration closes. The season begins Sunday, December 7th.

Winter Activity Guide Now Available

If you haven't heard, Recreation & Parks' [Winter 2026 Activity Guide is now available online!](#) With hundreds of great programs, activities, and events to choose from, there is something for everyone to help chase those winter blues away.

Remember, online registration for Howard County residents begins Wednesday, December 3rd at 6:00 p.m., with in-person, over-the-phone and mail-in beginning the following day at 8:00 a.m. For out-

of-county residents, online registration for you begins the following week on Wednesday, December 10th, at 6:00 p.m.

County residents, be sure to keep an eye out on your mailbox for your print copy. Hard copies will also be available later this month at Recreation & Parks' headquarters, located at 7120 Oakland Mills Road in Columbia, at any one of our [community centers](#), or your local [Howard County Library System branch](#).



Howard County Government | 3430 Court House Drive | Ellicott City, Maryland, MD 21043 US



Try email marketing for free today!