

Talk to Me

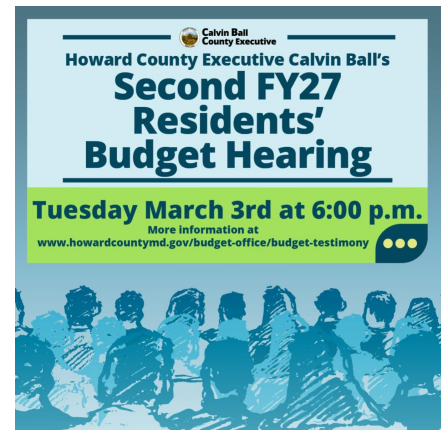
# County Executive Ball Presents: The Ball Bulletin



March 2, 2026

Dear Friends,

We will be holding our second Residents Budget Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2027 budget cycle tomorrow, March 3rd at 6:00 p.m. Residents who wish to speak at the hearing, can sign up ONLINE to do so by going our [“Budget Testimony Registration” website](#). Speakers must sign-up individually, and one person may not sign-up for several testifiers. Additionally, individual testimony is limited to three minutes and group testimony is limited to five. From the same link, residents can also submit online budget testimony; residents are reminded that internet testimony is considered public information and, as such, is subject to the [Maryland Public Information Act](#).



If you have any questions and/or problems registering for the Budget Hearing, please contact the Budget Office at 410-313-2077 (voice) or use Relay at 7-1-1, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

I'm confident that when we work together as a community to set our spending priorities, we will continue to remain resilient to any challenges that might emerge and always come out stronger in the end.

Sincerely,

# Community Updates

## Smart Investing Webinar

Calvin Ball  
County Executive

Tune in this Wednesday, March 4th, for a special webinar on avoiding scams and making smarter financial moves. Join local and federal experts for an hour of practical advice.



Register here <https://bit.ly/3MRZ1IB> and protect your financial future.

## Smart Investing Made Simpler

In honor of National Consumer Protection Week, you're invited to our virtual Lunch and Learn: Smart Investing Made Simpler!

The event will be this week on Wednesday, March 4, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Our Howard County Office of Consumer Protection will bring together federal and national experts to share best practices for smarter investing, explain how to spot potential scams, and offer practical tips to protect your financial future.

Learn how to protect your money and make informed decisions. Register today on our [“Smart Investing Made Simpler: Selecting and Protecting Your Investments” Webex webpage](#).

## AKA Day

It was a beautiful day joining my Sisters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. for AKA Day in Annapolis. It was especially great to see my dear friend Dr. Tonja Ringgold who was recently elected North Atlantic Regional Director, Dr. Angela Williams President for the Iota Lambda Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and who served as Co-Chair of our YES! Council, and so many friends.



As an Alpha man, I'm especially proud of the long-standing partnership between Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in Howard County, Maryland, and beyond; two organizations rooted in scholarship, service, and uplifting our communities. When we stand together, we amplify our impact and strengthen the villages we serve.



## First of All, Servants of All, We Shall Transcend All.

Fifty-one years ago, here in Howard County, 34 visionary men came together to establish the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. – Howard County, MD, rooted in brotherhood, scholarship, and service. On March 1st, as we celebrated Charter Day for this Howard County chapter, we reflect on our shared purpose. In a time marked by global conflict, economic uncertainty, and divisions that test the strength of our communities, the mission of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. remains as vital as ever. We are called to serve when service is needed most.

Here in Howard County, through the steadfast efforts of KPL, we have lived that charge. From mentoring our young people and supporting scholarships for local students, to partnering in community service initiatives, food drives, voter engagement efforts, and public forums that strengthen civic participation, our chapter has remained committed to uplifting our neighbors. We have stood alongside faith leaders, nonprofits, educators, and families to ensure that opportunity reaches every corner of our county.

As a proud member of the Kappa Phi Lambda Chapter, I am reminded that each of us is part of a larger story. One built on courage, conviction, and commitment to something greater than ourselves. Our founders faced obstacles of their own, yet they pressed forward with unwavering faith in the power of collective action.

We honor them best not only by remembering, but by living the values that define us by standing together, uplifting one another, and ensuring that the next 51 years shine even brighter than the last.

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## National Consumer Protection Week Kickoff

Happy National Consumer Protection Week, Howard County!

This week, our Office of Consumer Protection is joining partners nationwide to help residents protect themselves from scams, identity theft and fraud to empower our residents with the knowledge and tools to make safe financial decisions and protect personal information. Stay tuned all week for practical tips to keep you and your family safe.



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## Maryland's Next Filmmaking Destination

We have officially launched our Film Industry and Location Marketing (FILM) Task Force to position Howard County as Maryland's next premier filmmaking destination.

Film and television production has generated an estimated \$1.5 billion in economic impact across Maryland since 2012. With the right strategy, Howard County is well positioned to capture more of that opportunity, supporting local creatives, small businesses, tourism and job growth.

Our 13-member FILM Task Force, made up of dedicated volunteers, will meet through the summer to develop a comprehensive action plan to build a sustainable local film economy.

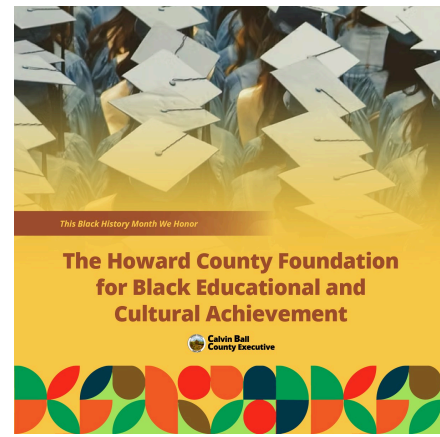
Check out this recent [The Baltimore Banner online news story](#) to learn more.

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## Empowering Our African American Youth

As we closed out Black History Month, we recognized the achievements of the Howard County Foundation for Black Educational and Cultural Achievement (HCFBECA).

Since 1977, HCFBECA has empowered African American youth in Howard County by providing scholarships to graduating high school seniors. To date, they have awarded over one million dollars to support academic excellence amongst black students. We look forward to the next 50 years of their service as we celebrate the next century of Black History Month.

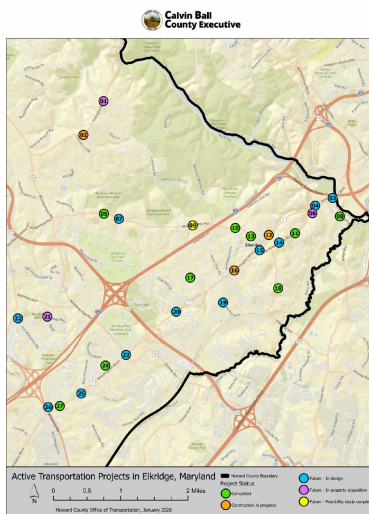


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## Welcome to The Capitoline Center

After a three-year renovation, our historic circuit courthouse has been transformed into a vibrant hub for arts, culture, and history. The Capitoline Center is opening today! Now the headquarters of our Howard County Arts Council and home to our county's first Asian American and Pacific Islander Cultural Center.

The Center, located at 8360 Court Avenue in Historic Ellicott City will be open to the public for an open house from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. today. We encourage all residents to come and explore this beautiful new space.



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## ElkrIDGE is on the Move

ElkrIDGE is on the move! Through our Department of Public Works, Office of Transportation, and partnership with the Maryland State Highway Administration, we currently have 27 active transportation projects across the ElkrIDGE community that are in varying stages of planning, design, construction. Of these, nine projects have been completed since 2019, helping to expand sidewalks, adding bike lanes, improving crosswalks, and implementing traffic calming measures.

We are committed to making meaningful investments to improve safety, connectivity, and mobility for everyone who lives, works, and travels across Howard County. To learn more about our ongoing and upcoming transportation work, we encourage you to attend our

upcoming Transportation Open House on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 4:30PM at the Howard County Library System's Miller Branch:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/transportation-open-house>.

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## Not Sure Who to Contact?

Need help finding the right County service? Whether it's

housing, recreation, health, or transportation, we've got you covered.

Reach out to [ask@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:ask@howardcountymd.gov) and our team will point you in the right direction.



## Call 988

This winter, your mental health matters. If you're feeling down or overwhelmed, you can always call 988. Struggling doesn't make you weak.

Remember, it's ok to ask for help.

## Lights, Camera, Action!

Just last week, we announced the formation of a new FILM Task Force to develop a strategy and attract movie and television productions to our community.

By partnering with leaders in the arts and business sectors, we're working to position Howard County as a destination for major productions. With it, we hope to bring jobs for creatives, boost local restaurants and hotels, and grow our economy. Stay tuned! The spotlight and more economic development could be coming to Howard County.



Learn more about the Task Force and its launch at [www.howardcountymd.gov/News021926](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/News021926).



## The Colored School

For 74 years, Black children in Ellicott City learned in the Colored School, despite severe inequities in facilities and resources. Now, this school stands today as a museum, preserving a story of determination and the pursuit of knowledge.

As we reflect on 100 years of Black History Month, this site reminds us why telling the full truth of history matters. We encourage all residents to visit the museum and engage with that history for yourselves!

Learn more at <https://www.visithowardcounty.com/listings/the-ellicott-city-colored-school-restored/1262/>.

## One Impactful Housing Investment

In November 2025, we celebrated the official opening of Patuxent Commons. The Commons is one of the most impactful housing investments in County history.

Developed with Mission First Housing Group, this 76-unit community supports low-income adults with disabilities, older adults, young adults, and families. With more than \$6 million invested by the County, Patuxent Commons is already delivering stability, dignity, and opportunity.

### Patuxent Commons

 Calvin Ball  
County Executive

Supported by a \$6 million investment, this 76-unit community provides essential housing for low-income families, older adults, and people with disabilities.



Learn more about it at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/News110525b>.



### See a Pothole? Tell HoCo

Winter weather can take a toll on our roads. With your help, we can keep Howard County moving safely.

If you notice a pothole, damaged sign, or other roadway issue after a storm, let us know through Tell HoCo. Your report helps our crews respond quickly and keep our roads clear and safe all season long.

Spot something? Report it at

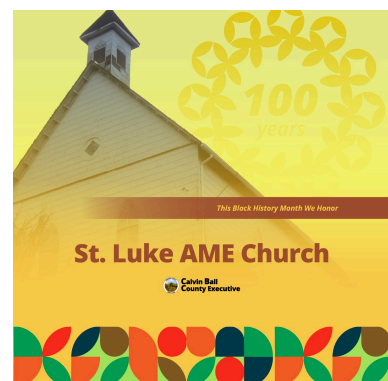
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/tell-hoco>.

## A Testament to Faith and Community

Faith institutions have long been pillars of Black resilience and community.

St. Luke AME Church is the oldest church in Ellicott City. It has stood as a testament to faith, perseverance, and Black community life since the 1800s. From worship to advocacy, the church has served generations through changing times.

Black History Month reminds us that sacred spaces like St. Luke have always been and will continue to be centers of hope and community. Learn more at <https://www.stlukeame-ellicottcity.org/>.



## Supporting Transportation Projects Modernization

This past week, I traveled to Annapolis to testify in support of Senate Bill 62, the Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026.



This legislation modernizes how the Maryland Department of Transportation prioritizes projects. It creates a clearer process for counties to initiate project development and strengthens public insight into how projects are scored and selected.

For Howard County, this means a more transparent and collaborative partnership with the state, and a stronger voice in advancing transportation projects.

Thank you to Chair Guzzone and the members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee for the opportunity to testify. I am also grateful to the Moore–Miller Administration, our partners at MDOT and the Maryland Association of Counties for their collaboration in shaping this important legislation.

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### Are You Our Next Youth Poet Laureate?

Applications are now open for the 2026–2027 Howard County Youth Poet Laureate!

In partnership with the Howard County Arts Council and the Howard County Poetry & Literature Society, this program, which we launched in 2024, amplifies the power of youth expression in our community.

The Youth Poet Laureate serves as an ambassador for literacy, arts, and civic engagement, sharing their passion for poetry at public readings and community events throughout the year.



If you are a young poet ready to use your voice to inspire others, we encourage you to apply by April 30, 2026. Learn more at [https://www.hocoarts.org/\\_grant/youth-poet-laureate/](https://www.hocoarts.org/_grant/youth-poet-laureate/).



### Shaping Howard County's Future Through New Initiatives

The 2026 Howard County Innovation Summit was a resounding success!

Leaders in technology, healthcare, business, and government came together to spread bold ideas and ignite action. Our keynote speaker, Precious L.

Williams, delivered a jaw-dropping address that stole the room.

We also unveiled some major initiatives set to shape Howard County's future:

- Smart ER, a new urgent care navigation platform
- The SPARK Program, backed by a \$150,000 investment to prep youth for careers in AI, agritech, clean energy and cybersecurity
- An AI-enhanced permitting modernization effort
- Our new Smart Assistant chatbot and GovDelivery text alert system
- SmartHoCo and a redesigned, interactive HoCoDASH

Innovation in Howard County is data-informed and people-driven. It's about improving healthcare, strengthening our workforce, and making government work better for everyone. Thank you to our sponsors, partners and attendees for making this Summit another one to remember. We are elevating, exploring, expanding and excelling together.

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## A National, Local Treasurer

Black History Month is also about honoring courage and service.

Vivian C. "Millie" Bailey was one of the first African American officers in the Women's Army Corps and a lifelong advocate for education, health, and veterans. Her leadership extended far beyond military service into decades of community volunteering and civic engagement in Howard County.



We also remember her impact with Millie Bailey Park in Columbia. That park will soon be home to a new Veterans Monument, creating a permanent place for reflection, gratitude, and remembrance for those who have served our nation.

As we mark 100 years since the origin of Black History Month, we honor Millie Bailey, and all the Black Americans who have served our nation.



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## Thousands of Programs, One Easy App

Looking for food, housing, healthcare, transportation, or other support services? The CAREAPP makes it easy to find and connect with more than 2,500 programs available right here in Howard County.

The CAREAPP is a free, easy-to-use website and app that helps residents quickly locate trusted community resources, all in one place. Explore available support today at [www.FindHCResources.org](http://www.FindHCResources.org) or download CAREAPP

Howard County in your app store.

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## Improving Housing Stability

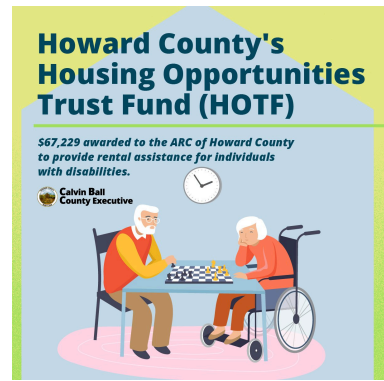
Howard County's Housing Opportunities Trust Fund (HOTF), which we launched in 2021 doesn't just create new housing; it helps Howard County residents maintain their homes and independence.

In FY23, we awarded \$67,229 from the HOTF to the ARC of Howard County to provide rental assistance for

individuals with disabilities. Every dollar has been disbursed, directly improving housing stability and quality of life for these residents.

Learn more at

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/DHCD-HOTF>.



## Higher Winter Energy Bills?

Many residents are seeing higher energy bills this winter.

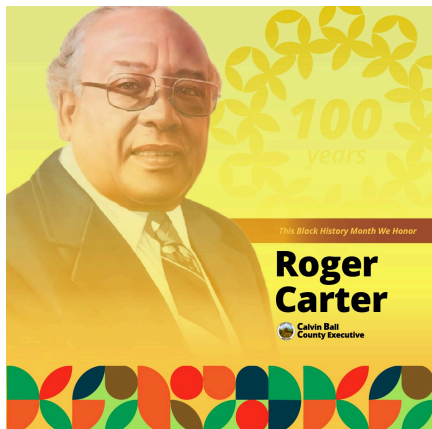
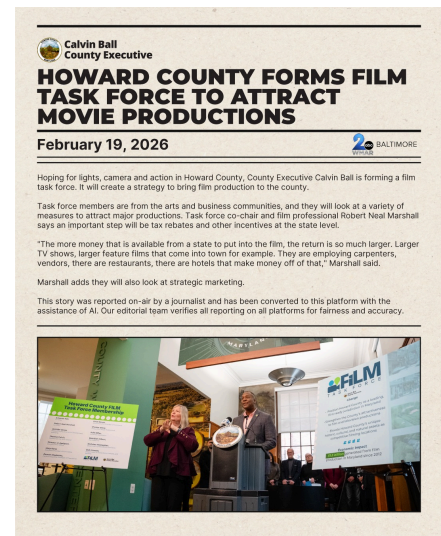
If you're feeling the impact, payment plans, budget billing, and energy assistance programs may help manage costs and provide flexibility during the winter months. Visit [www.bge.com/winter](http://www.bge.com/winter) to learn more.

## Our FILM Task Force

Howard County is forming a new Film Task Force to develop a strategy to attract movie and television productions to our community.

By partnering with leaders in the arts and business sectors, we're working to position Howard County as a destination for major productions. With it, we hope to bring jobs for creatives, boost local restaurants and hotels, and grow our economy. Stay tuned! The spotlight is coming to Howard County.

To learn more, check out this recent [WMAR ABC 2 News online story](#).



## Roger Carter

Black History Month is a time to honor local leaders who transformed opportunity into action.

Roger Carter pioneered transportation access for Black residents in Howard County during segregation, founding the first Black-owned transportation business in the county. His leadership extended into civic life as the first Black member of the Ellicott City Rotary Club and the Planning Board.

As we commemorate a century of Black History Month, we honor Carter's belief

that service, dignity, and perseverance can change lives.

Learn more about his story in this [online February 2023 WBAL News story](#).

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### Service, Mentorship, Outreach, and Unity

For years, leaders across our Black Greek Letter Organizations, the National Pan-Hellenic Council of Howard County, and our County Government worked in partnership to bring a vision to life. What was once a former elementary school is now a shared space for community service, mentorship, outreach, and unity.



It was an honor to join our community for the official ribbon cutting of the High Ridge Center! This 21,000-square-foot facility represents collaboration. It represents investment. It represents a commitment to strengthening our community together. Congratulations to everyone who helped make this vision a reality.

Thank you to Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc., and Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., and Sigma Pi Phi, Inc. for always serving our community and leading with love.

We can't wait to see the impact High Ridge Center will have for generations to come.



### Real Men, Real Talk

We joined Senator Angela Alsobrooks for “Real Men, Real Talk.” an important roundtable focused on the physical, mental, and emotional health of men and boys in our community.

Too often, the health needs of men and boys go unspoken or unsupported. Events like this are about changing that reality. We take the time to remind our young men that strength includes vulnerability, that asking for help is courage, and that their well-being matters.

Thank you to Dr. Denise Richardson, Stephen Conti, Ira Jamal Branch and Todd Baker for helping create a safe space for honest conversation. Thank you to our faith leaders, health professionals, local fraternities, and every resident who showed up ready to listen and share.

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### The Legacy at Cedar Lane

In July 2025, we also broke ground on The Legacy at Cedar Lane, another transformative redevelopment

project in partnership with Enterprise.

Together with The Vision at Parkway, these projects represent more than \$17 million in County investment to replace outdated housing with modern, stable communities. They reflect our long-term commitment to affordability, quality, and neighborhood stability. The projects are also set to bring more than 200 new homes to Howard County.



Read more at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/News071625b> to see how we're rebuilding for the future.

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## Volunteers Wanted

Howard County Library System (HCLS) and the Howard County Public School System's (HCPSS) "Battle of the Books" reading competition for fifth grade students, returns to Merriweather Post Pavilion on Friday, April 24th. To help make this year's competition one-to-remember for our young readers, HCLS and HCPSS are looking for volunteers to help out. High school students in need of service hours or who just want to give back and cheer on their younger classmates are encouraged to sign-up but must have a supervising adult signed up for their same shift.

To learn more and/or to sign-up to volunteer, visit [HCLS's "Battle of the Books at Merriweather Post Pavilion" SignUpGenius webpage](#). HCLS will email out details about parking, pizza, and more to all volunteers prior to the event. For questions, email [winifred.lafrancechambers@hclibrary.org](mailto:winifred.lafrancechambers@hclibrary.org).



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## 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](mailto:flag@howardcountymd.gov).

# Government Updates

## Budget Office

*Second Fiscal Year 2027 Residents' Budget Hearing*

I will hold my second Residents' Budget Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget cycle tomorrow, March 3rd at 6:00 p.m. This year's budget hearing will be held virtually and can be watched live via [Webex](#), using webinar number 2303 422 0232 and using the password: "password" (72779673 when dialing from a phone or video system).

Residents will be able to sign-up ONLINE to speak at the hearing by going to our Budget Office's "[Budget Testimony Registration](#)" website. Speakers must sign-up individually, and one person may not sign-up for several testifiers. Additionally, individual testimony is limited to three minutes and group testimony is limited to five minutes.

From the same link, residents will also have the option to provide online budget testimony. However, residents are reminded that internet testimony is considered public information and, as such, is subject to the [Maryland Public Information Act](#).

If you have any questions and/or problems registering for the Budget Hearing, please contact the Budget Office at 410-313-2077 (voice) or use Relay at 7-1-1, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## Department of Community Resources and Services

### *Supporting Families*

Through family workshops, local resources, events, educational programs, and more, our Department of Community Resources and Services' (DCRS) Office of Children and Families (OCF) supports Howard County families with opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive. 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. OCF's "[Parent's Guide to Howard County](#)" for 2026 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.

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### *Children's Discovery Fair*

Mark your calendars for OCF's annual [Children's Discovery Fair "Little Learners. Big Discoveries."](#), which returns Saturday, April 11th to DCRS's [East Columbia 50+ Center](#) from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Geared towards children ages three to five, this year's Fair, offers hands-on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) experiences and interactive activities, games, stories, and movement. The Fair will also feature on-site dental screenings provided by Colgate® Bright Smiles Bright Futures.



To snag your ticket to this wonderful event, visit <https://HoCo->



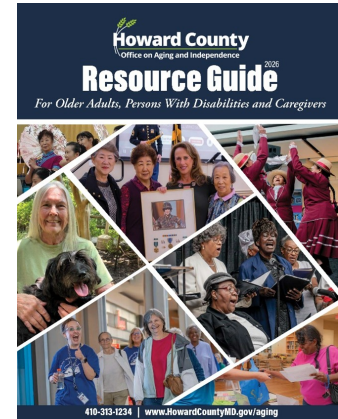
### *Meet OCF's Spanish-Speaking Staff*

Nuestro equipo de habla hispana en la Oficina de Niños y Familias está listo para ayudarlo a conectarse con recursos y servicios (prenatales hasta los cinco años).

¿Preguntas? Llame al 410-313-1940 o escriba a [familiasenespanol@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:familiasenespanol@howardcountymd.gov).

### *Resource Guide for Older Adults Now Available*

As county residents are embracing new opportunities to live longer and thrive, DCRS's Office on Aging and Independence's (OAI) is helping to ensure those added years are healthy, connected, and secure. In OAI's latest annual [\*Resource Guide for Older Adults, Adults with Disabilities and Caregivers\*](#), residents will find updated listings for programs and services for older adults of all ages and abilities, including wellness and prevention programs, caregiver and benefits support, nutrition and housing options, dementia-friendly initiatives, transportation, and opportunities to stay active and engaged.



Available [online](#) or at one of our [50+ centers](#), OAI's annual Resource Guide is your gateway to valuable information that supports healthy aging, promotes financial security, and encourages meaningful social connections. I encourage you to check it out today!

### *Lunch and Learn with Maryland Access Point*

Whether you're planning for the future or managing today's challenge, learn how to navigate aging, caregiving, and disability-related resources with confidence by joining OAI's Maryland Access Point information specialists for its upcoming "Lunch and Learn" series. Set to take place from noon to 1:00 p.m. at The Loan Closet, located at 7125 Riverwood Drive in Columbia, upcoming sessions are scheduled for and will focus on:

- Tuesday, March 24th: Living with Serious Illness: Demystifying Hospice and Palliative Care – Get equipped to make the right choices for you or a loved one.
- Tuesday, April 21st: Planning Ahead for Health-Care Choices – How to make your wishes known with an advance directive.

Attendees should bring their lunch; however, beverages and dessert will be provided. **Registration not required** to attend any of these sessions.

For questions and/or more information about this "Lunch and Learn" series, contact Kim Flash at 410-313-3668 or email [kflash@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:kflash@howardcountymd.gov).



### *Your Circle of Connection*

Save the date and join OAI on Friday, May 1st as it kicks off Older Americans Month with its 2026 “[OAI Showcase: Your Circle of Connection](#).” Set to take place from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in The Mall in Columbia’s lower level center court, this year’s event brings together community members, service providers, and local organizations to highlight the programs, resources, and supports available to older adults, caregivers, and individuals with

disabilities in Howard County. Come explore exhibitor booths, attend educational presentations, participate in hands-on activities, and connect with experts in aging, health, and wellness at this impactful event.

To learn more about this event, check out [www.howardcountymd.gov/aging-independence/oai-showcase-your-circle-connection](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/aging-independence/oai-showcase-your-circle-connection) or visit <https://bit.ly/ShowcaseRegistration2026> to register to attend.

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### *Tax Prep Assistance*

This tax season, DCRS has partnered with MakingChange to offer eligible residents free VITA tax preparation services at the [Howard County MultiService Center](#). Available to residents who earned \$69,000 or less in 2025, on-site IRS-approved volunteers will provide participants with easy-to-understand guidance to identify the documents they need, make the necessary calculations, and complete the forms correctly.



To schedule an appointment today, contact MakingChange at 443-518-7649 or email [VITA@makingchangecenter.org](mailto:VITA@makingchangecenter.org).

### *Office of Community Sustainability*

#### *A Bright Idea*

Did you know that LED light bulbs use up to 80 percent less energy, last more than 25,000 hours, and emit far less heat than traditional light bulbs? Also, unlike CFL light bulbs, LED light bulbs contain no mercury, making them a cleaner, healthier choice for your home.

If you are looking to save some energy, reduce your electric bill, and utilize a safer lighting option in your home, I encourage you to check out Office of Community Sustainability’s (OCS) [Lightbulb Exchange program](#). Through this program, Howard County residents can stop by the circulation desk at any [Howard County Library System branch](#) or the welcome desk at our [Roger Carter Community Center](#) to trade in their old incandescent and CFL bulbs for up to four LED lightbulbs, per visit and while supplies last.

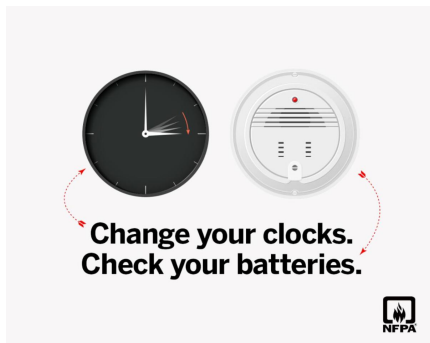
Please note, while all types of incandescent and CFL light bulb shapes are accepted for exchange, tube light bulbs are not. For county residents looking to dispose of tube light bulbs and other light bulb styles, such as halogen bulbs, that are not accepted by this program, be sure to check out the County’s Bureau of

Environmental Services' "[Light Bulb Recycling](#)" flier online for guidance on how and where to properly dispose of these light bulbs.

While helping residents cut costs, OCS's Lightbulb Exchange program also supports our [Howard County Climate Forward: Climate Action and Resiliency Plan](#) by reducing energy use and carbon emissions at the community level. To learn more about our Climate Forward initiative, visit <https://climateforward.howardcountymd.gov/>.

Since the launch of OCS's Lightbulb Exchange program, the County has provided more than 5,000 LED light bulbs! So, turn in your old light bulbs today so this program can continue to shine bright!

## Department of Fire and Rescue Services



### *Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery*

With daylight saving time set to begin this Sunday, March 8th, our Department of Fire and Rescue Services is reminding residents as you set your clocks back this weekend, to make sure you also check your smoke and carbon dioxide alarms. Whether you have the sealed-in, 10-year/long-life battery-operated alarms or hardwired alarms (with battery backups), it is always good to check your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to ensure they are functioning properly. Remember, your first line of defense against a house fire is a working smoke alarm. Ensure your family's safety by checking your alarms.

## Howard County Health Department

### *A Photovoice Exhibition of Jessup and Savage*

The Howard County Health Department (HCHD) invites you to join its Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) this Thursday, March 5th for its third Photovoice Exhibition. Set to take place from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the [Savage Volunteer Fire Company's](#) Rental Hall, HCHD's

Community Health Workers (CHW) will present neighborhood photos showcasing our county's Savage and Jessup communities. Through the lens of the CHWs, the exhibition highlights the strengths, opportunities, challenges, and unexpected discoveries within these neighborhoods, offering a grassroots perspective on community health and well-being.

Through this exhibition, HCHD and its Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition hope to engage residents and others in meaningful conversations that can inform future initiatives and inspire collective action for positive change in the area.

To register to attend this FREE event, visit [bit.ly/chwsavagejessup](http://bit.ly/chwsavagejessup). For questions, email [chw@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:chw@howardcountymd.gov).

A flyer for a photovoice exhibition. At the top left is the Howard County LHIC logo. The main title is "PHOTOVOICE EXHIBITION" with the subtitle "Through the Eyes of a Community Health Worker". To the right, it says "You're Invited". Below the title, it says "Featuring photos and stories from the Jessup and Savage communities. Share your ideas to help us plan real steps for a healthier community." There are four small images showing community scenes. On the right, there is a "REGISTER HERE" button with a QR code and the URL "bit.ly/chwsavagejessup". Below the images, it lists the event details: "WHEN: Thursday, Mar. 5, 2020, 6:00 - 8:00pm" and "WHERE: Savage Vol. Fire Co., 8121 Centor Rd, Savage, MD 21076". At the bottom, it says "Registration is FREE and snacks will be served. Email CHW@howardcountymd.gov with questions."



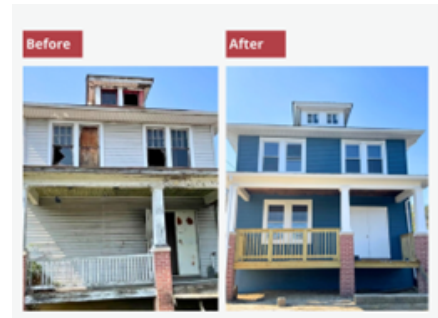
Next Saturday, March 14th, the HCHD and HCLHIC will also be partnership to host a Safe Firearm Storage Workshop from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at [Historic Oakland](#) in Columbia. Participants will learn how to safely secure and store their firearms in their homes to prevent accidents and unapproved use.

As pre-registration is required, visit [“HCLHIC and Tactical 52 Firearms Safe Storage Workshop” Eventbrite website](#) today to register and for additional event details. Please note, the deadline to register is this Sunday, March 8th.

## Department of Planning and Zoning

### *Route 1 Tax Credit Program*

Our Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) is accepting 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](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/planning-zoning/route-1-tax-credit-program).



### *Historic Preservation Commission Meeting*

This Wednesday, March 5th, DPZ’s [Historic Preservation Commission](#) will hold a virtual meeting via WebEx, starting at 7:00 p.m.

For a copy of the meeting’s agenda, as well as instructions on how to watch and/or participate in the meeting, visit the County’s [“Historic Preservation Commission” website](#).

### *Design Advisory Panel Meeting*

Next Wednesday, March 11th, DPZ’s [Design Advisory Panel](#) (DAP) will hold a virtual meeting starting at 7:00 p.m., to review the following item:

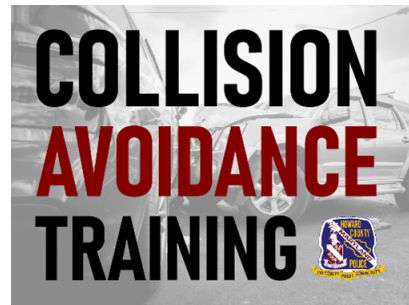
- [Sunrise Plaza](#)

A copy of the meeting [agenda](#) and additional information about this meeting, including how to watch live and/or attend, can be found [online on DAP’s website](#).

## Police Department

### *Collision Avoidance Training for New Drivers*

From cornering to skid recovery, steering, acceleration, emergency braking, and evasive maneuvering, Howard County Police Department's (HCPD) Collision Avoidance Training (C.A.T.) program is designed to teach new drivers, age 16–20, how to maintain control and better handle their vehicle in various situations. With its 2026 class dates just announced: March 28th, April 25th, May 9th, June 27th, July 18th, August 15th, September 19th, October 24th, November 14th, and December 12th, be sure to visit HCPD's "[Youth Programs](#)" [website](#) to learn more about the program and/or register for one of these class dates.



For questions about HCPD's C.A.T. program, call 410–313–2207 or email [catprogram@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:catprogram@howardcountymd.gov).

## Department of Public Works

### Bureau of Environmental Services

#### Household Hazardous Waste

Saturdays ONLY (April–November) 8am–4pm  
2350 Marriottsville Road, Marriottsville, MD 21104  
Proof of Howard County residency required

**YES we accept:**

- Batteries (rechargeable)
- Brake & Transmission Fluids
- CFL bulbs and tubes
- Chemicals
- Cleaners
- Degreasers
- Fungicides, Pesticides, Herbicides
- Gasoline
- Antifreeze
- Paint & Paint thinners
- Removers & Solvents

**NO we do not accept:**

- Ammunition
- Asbestos
- Commercial waste
- Oil
- Explosives
- Fireworks
- Industrial waste
- Kepones (an insecticide)
- Medical waste
- PCB's
- Radioactive Material

KNOWBeforeYouTHROW.org • help@howardcountycycles.org • 410-313-6444

### *Last Special Winter HHW Saturday*

Our Department of Public Work's (DPW) Bureau of Environmental Services' will host its FINAL special winter [Household Hazardous Waste](#) (HHW) this Saturday, March 7th. Throughout the winter, the Bureau has hosted these special HHW Saturday's to ensure residents can properly and safely dispose of their HHW waste while the HHW program is on pause. The Bureau's 2026 HHW season will resume

the first Saturday of April 2026.

To learn more about our HHW program and those special winter HHW Saturday's, stay tuned to [www.howardcountymd.gov/HHW](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/HHW).

## Construction Report

Below are details regarding new, upcoming, completed and/or delayed Capital Projects and/or maintenance project(s) that have been announced.

### **Ellicott City**

- [Bristol Channel Sewer Rehabilitation Project](#) (Capital Project S–6601) – Project to stabilize an eight–inch exposed sewer pipe in a stream located behind 10261 Bristol Channel. While the project is not expected to have an impact on the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the area, signs have been posted to alert community members of the construction work, which is expected to take place Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. To reach the site, construction crews will utilize an access road off Burnside Drive. Weather permitting, the project is expected to be completed by late March 2026.

To learn about our DPW projects currently underway, check out [DPW's website](#). 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](mailto: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

### *Spring/Summer Activity Guide Registration Starts this Week*

[Online registration](#) for our Department of Recreation & Parks' [Spring/Summer 2026 Activity Guide](#) begins this Wednesday, March 4th at 6:00 p.m. for Howard County residents. From cooking and fitness classes, to sports, lifelong learning, camping, dance, science, technology, LEGO and more, there is something to keep everyone in your family active this spring and summer.

Mail-in, over-the-phone, and in-person for Howard County residents begins the morning of Thursday, March 5th.

For out-of-county residents, online registration begins next Wednesday, March 11th at 6:00 p.m. for you, with all other registration forms available the following day.



### *Summer Camp Registration Now Open*

In addition, registration for Recreation & Parks' [Camp Guide Summer 2026](#) is also NOW open for all. From hands-on science and art exploration to LEGO robotics and engineering, nature discovery, and a wide variety of sports, there is a ton of great camp opportunities available to keep your children active, engaged, and inspired this summer. As spots for some camps fill up quickly, be sure to register [online](#), in-person, over-the-phone, or mail-in today.

If you're looking to fill a particular week or weeks this summer, check out Recreation & Parks', ["2026 Camps By Weeks" website](#), which for your convenience, breaks down what camps are being offered each week.

### *Public Information Session on a Proposed Ice Rink at Meadowbrook Athletic Complex*

This Wednesday, March 4th, Recreation & Parks will hold a [public information session](#) at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria at [Ellicott Mills Middle School](#), to discuss a proposed expansion to its [Meadowbrook Athletic Center](#). The project includes the addition of an indoor ice rink and added restrooms and other amenities.

As part of its presentation, the County will present its findings for two site locations that were reviewed for the expansion.

If you are unable to attend the information session and would like to view the presentation and/or have questions, please contact Mr. Jason Thompson at 410-313-4031 or email [jthompson@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jthompson@howardcountymd.gov). A sign language interpreter will be at the meeting to sign the presentation.

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### *Wine in the Woods Returns*

**Tickets are NOW ON SALE online** for Recreation & Parks' 2026 Wine in the Woods, set to return the weekend of May 16th and 17th to Symphony Woods in Columbia. Celebrating its 32nd year of aged-perfection, I invite you to come celebrate the charm and character of this annual wine festival. From great food, shopping, music, wine, and beer, this year's two-day event will feature 30 juried artisans and specialty crafters, more than 20 high-quality restaurants and caterers, and six live bands spread out throughout the festival grounds.



To buy your tickets, visit [www.wineinthewoods.com/tickets](http://www.wineinthewoods.com/tickets) today. **PLEASE NOTE, our Department of Recreation & Parks is the ONLY one selling tickets to this event; DO NOT be scammed by fake third-party vendors claiming to sell tickets to Wine in the Woods.**



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### *Sweetheart Family Dance*

Valentine's Day might be over, but love is still in the air at our Recreation & Park's annual **Sweetheart Family Dance**. Parents (or special adults) and your little sweetheart or sweethearts, age four to 11, I invite you to join Recreation & Parks this Saturday, March 7th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at its **Harriet Tubman Cultural Center** in

Columbia, for a memorable evening of dancing and fun. In addition to an energetic DJ, this special event will also feature light refreshments, crafts, a souvenir photo, and a sweet treat.

The cost to participate is \$60 for one adult and one child, and \$35 for each additional child. As this event routinely sells out fast, be sure to visit Recreation & Parks' **Active Network website** today to snag your ticket. Inclement weather date is Saturday, March 14th.

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### *The Gold Rush*

Just in time for St. Patrick's Day, Recreation & Parks' annual **The Gold Rush** Scavenger Hunt at its **North Laurel Community Center** (NLCC) is back! Children of all ages are invited to join NLCC staff in the

center's gymnasium this Saturday, March 7th from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., to search for golden coins, prizes, and if you are lucky, maybe even a pot of gold.

Cost is \$10 to participate To register, visit Recreation & Parks' [Active Network registration website](#).



### *Kid's Fest is Back!*

Mark your calendars Howard County, Recreation & Parks' annual [Kid's Fest](#) is back! Set to take place Saturday, April 4th from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at [Meadowbrook Park](#), this year's event will feature sports instruction, games, activities, arts and crafts, food, an egg hunt, and so much more. While [online preregistration](#) is encouraged (cost is \$8 per child

age two to 12), cashless onsite registration will also be available the day of the event (day of the event cost is \$10 per child age two to 12).

To learn more about this year's Kid's Fest and/or to preregister, visit [www.howardcountymd.gov/kids-fest](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/kids-fest).

## **Office of Transportation**

### *Transportation Open House*

Join our Office of Transportation's (OoT) tomorrow, March 3rd from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Howard County Library System's [Miller Branch](#) in Ellicott City, for its annual [Transportation Open House](#) (originally scheduled for January 29th, but cancelled due to weather. This annual open house event incorporates OoT's Active Transportation and Transportation Priorities Open Houses and includes additional topics areas of transportation safety, transit, and regional planning, and roadway maintenance and operations. The event provides attendees with the opportunity to comment on the County's overall transportation priorities, approaches to solving common transportation challenges, and specific projects. Representatives from the Howard County Police Department, Howard County Public School System, Maryland Department of Transportation, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, and Columbia Association will also be in attendance.

Additionally, representatives from DPW's Transportation and Special Projects Division will also be on hand with information on the following projects:

- Dobbin Road Pathway
- Frederick Road Shared Use Path
- Harpers Farm Road Bike Lanes
- Old Annapolis Road Shared Use Path (Centennial Lane to Columbia Road)
- Patuxent Branch Trail Improvements
- South Entrance Trail

To learn more about the Transportation Open House, visit [www.howardcountymd.gov/transportation-open-house](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/transportation-open-house).

## *Help Us Update BikeHoward*

This past week, [I announced the launch of an update to BikeHoward](#), the County's Bicycle Master Plan. [BikeHoward](#) provides guidance for improvements for transportation and recreational bicycling, both on-street and off-street. As part of the update process, Transportation is seeking the public's feedback as it begins reviewing the original plan and analyzing pertinent data to guide the County forward in its bicycle infrastructure development and programming for the next 10 years.



As part of its update process, Transportation will host a number of public workshops, now through next Tuesday, March 10th, to discuss *BikeHoward*, answer questions, and gather public comment. Transportation staff and project consultants will be on hand for each and the workshops will not include a formal presentation. The workshops will take place on:

- Tuesday, March 3rd from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at HCLS's [Miller branch](#)
  - Part of Transportation's [Transportation Open House](#) event
- Thursday, March 5th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the County's Department of Recreation & Parks' [North Laurel Community Center](#)
- Tuesday, March 10th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at HCLS's [Central branch](#)

Those unable to attend the public workshops, will be able to view the meeting materials on Transportation's [BikeHoward website](#) beginning February 23rd. On this same page, community members will also find a public survey to share their feedback with Transportation, starting February 23rd through March 31st.

For questions regarding the *BikeHoward* update and upcoming workshops, contact Transportation's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator Mr. Chris Eatough at 410-313-0567 or email [ceatough@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:ceatough@howardcountymd.gov).



### *Montgomery County's Flash Bus Rapid Transit Service Extension Public Meeting*

In preparation for the upcoming extension of Montgomery County's Flash Bus Rapid Transit Service to Howard County later this year, Transportation and DPW are hosting a public meeting on Monday, March 16th, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Howard County Library System's [Central Branch](#) to discuss the project's updated design. While there will be no formal presentation at the meeting, the design plans will be available for public viewing and staff members will be on

hand to explain the updates, answer any questions, and gather public comments.

To learn more about this service extension, check out Transportation's ["Flash Bus Rapid Transit" website](#).

