



# Owen Brown Community Association

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

410.381.0202

[owenbrownvillage.org](http://owenbrownvillage.org)

## ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS FOR FY 2026

Dear Owen Brown Resident,

We are pleased to present to you this Annual Report which highlights the activities and services provided by the Owen Brown Community Association (OBCA) during the Fiscal Year 2026, which began on May 1, 2025 and ended on April 30, 2026.

As an owner or renter of property in Owen Brown, you are a member of the OBCA. OBCA is distinct from the Columbia Association but is funded by a small portion of the annual assessment fee you pay to CA. OBCA uses its resources to maintain and enforce Owen Brown's architectural guidelines, run the Owen Brown Community Center, located on Cradlerock Way, advocate on behalf of village residents, and organize community engagement events for village residents.

Every April, OBCA holds an election to determine the Board of Directors for the coming year, which are volunteer positions. The Village Board oversees OBCA and hires a Village Manager to run OBCA operations on a day-to-day basis.

The Village Board wants to hear from residents. Residents may contact the entire Board via email at [obvillageboard@googlegroups.com](mailto:obvillageboard@googlegroups.com). Board meetings are open to the public and are usually held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Owen Brown Community Center. To confirm a meeting date or for more information in general, please visit our website at [www.owenbrownvillage.org](http://www.owenbrownvillage.org), or call our office at 410-381-0202.

The office of the OBCA is located in the Owen Brown Community Center, 6800 Cradlerock Way. Office hours are M-F 9-5, Sat 9-12. Limited services are available evenings and weekends, when open for rentals.

Sincerely,

*The Owen Brown Village Board*

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## Covenant Activities for FY 26

The Owen Brown Resident Architectural Committee (RAC) members included: Peter Monahan, Marilyn Lepore, Dan McArthur, Lisa King and Jessie Stever.

The Executive Architectural Committee (EAC) members included: Sean Hammer, Jane Parrish, Andy Stack, Marilyn Lepore and Linda Ortiz-Byrd.

The RAC members review applications for exterior alterations and in-home businesses, and the EAC approves all applications and handles any appeals.

RAC	FY 26	FY 25
Total RAC Applications	360	398
Total Approved as submitted	311	334
Approved w Amendments	26	37
Total Denied	18	21
Total Tabled	5	3
Total Withdrawn	4	3
Total appeals to EAC	6	6
Appeals Approved	1	6
<b>Violations</b>		
Total Violation Letters	82	91
Cases Settled at Village Level	58	67
Cases Pending @ Village Level	31	40
ARC cases closed this year	8	8
Cases Referred this Year	2	2
<b>Letters of Compliance</b>		
Number of LOCs	107	94
Number Non Compliant	87	82

*Thank you to all of our volunteers for their service to the Owen Brown community.*

## FY 26 Financial Result

### Income

01 CA Annual Share	347,528
02 Lease and Rental	79,354
04 Interest	3,290
05 Special Events	2,127
Total 06 Fees	540
Total 07 Miscellaneous	2,077
08 Gain/loss on Disposal of Asset	0

**Total Income** 434,916

### Expense

09 Staff Salaries	231,366
11 Contract Labor	4,408
12 Payroll Benefits	11,682
13 Payroll Taxes	18,456
14 Janitorial Expenses	29,837
15 Fees	6,764
16 Operating Expenses	14,499
17 Business Expenses	768
18 Insurance	7,757
19 Advertising	0
20 Newsletter	30,147
21 Other Printing	590
22 Donations/Contributions	0
23 Special Events	24,447
24 Taxes	88
25 Utilities	27,818
26 Repairs & Maintenance	11,323
27 Furniture, Fixtures, Equip	6,018

**Total Expenses Before Depreciation** 424,967

28 Depreciation 6,511

**Total Expense** 431,477

**Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets** 3,439

# Board Activities and Accomplishments for FY 2026

## Owen Brown Community Association FY 26 Board Members

Brad Butler, Chairperson/President; Linda Ortiz-Byrd, Vice-Chairperson; Adil Ahmed; Mae Beale; Surya Wright (May 1–Aug. 8); Sam Michael (Nov. 4–Apr. 30)

## President’s Highlights

The Owen Brown Community Association had another active and productive year. This was Ilana Sambuco-Paul’s first full year as Village Manager, and her contributions were evident across every area of OBCA operations — from the growth of our events program and communications reach to meaningful improvements in facility management and covenant processes. Here are some of the key activities and accomplishments from this year.

## Board Appointments

- Welcomed Surya Wright to the Board at the start of FY26, and upon her departure to attend Law School, appointed Sam Michael mid-year to fill her vacant seat.
- As FY26 closes, we thank Adil Ahmed for two years of dedicated service to Owen Brown — his advocacy work, thoughtful attention to detail, and willingness to take on assignments have made a real difference.
- We appointed Tony Bell to the Board in FY27.
- Appointed and re-appointed members to the Residential Architectural Committee (RAC) and Executive Architectural Committee (EAC) to oversee the architectural covenant process.
- Appointed an independent election committee to oversee a fair village election.

## Architectural Covenant Process

- Processed 360 RAC applications, with complaints received down 17% year-over-year and pending cases down 22% year-over-year — a trend that has continued for several years. This reflects the sustained impact of proactive enforcement
- Referred two cases to the CA Architectural Resource Committee for potential legal action, and closed eight previously referred cases.
- Conducted 636 proactive maintenance inspections across the village on a four-year rotation.
- Ratified an annual update to the architectural guidelines following a joint review with the EAC.
- Staff launched online LOC submission, cross-trained all staff to provide backup coverage, and hosted two new homeowner seminars on covenant compliance.

## Budget & Governance

- Oversaw the association’s budget through quarterly reviews; total income of approximately \$434,900.
- Approved the FY27 budget, incorporating investment in facility maintenance and continued operational improvements.
- Donated building space to several non profit Howard County community organizations, representing approximately 100 hours of in-kind support.
- Negotiated a small concession in the distribution of CA’s \$3.5M village grant. Despite the concession, the formula still systematically over-funds villages who manage large, commercially marketable CA facilities at the expense of Owen Brown and other villages that manage smaller community centers. While we were unable to convince the other villages to give up funding, we remain committed to finding a long-term solution that more equitably serves the community’s priorities.
- OBCA did not have a cash donations budget this year. Core operational expenses have grown faster than revenues for several years, crowding out discretionary donations. The FY27 budget also does not allocate funds to cash donations.

## Operations

OBCA Staff completed several notable operational improvements during FY26:

- Migrated office infrastructure to the cloud and upgraded security cameras.
- Implemented a new online room rental management platform, replacing a system running on a 2008 server.
- Passed credit card processing fees to end users, saving OBCA approximately \$5,000 annually.
- Grew long-term tenant base, strengthening OBCA’s recurring revenue.

*(continued on page 4)*

## Board Activities and Accomplishments for FY2026, *continued from page 3*

### Advocacy

- Sent a letter to Howard County articulating Owen Brown’s priorities for the FY27 budget, including:
  - Cradlerock Way Complete Streets safety improvements
  - Multi-use path along Dobbin Road
  - East Columbia Library Park and surrounding infrastructure
- Sent a letter to Columbia Association articulating Owen Brown’s priorities for the CA FY27 budget.
- Met with Vikki Garcia from the Howard County Executive’s office and representatives from DPW, Planning, and Transportation to discuss local infrastructure projects and New Town zoning.
- Met with PFC Corey Frock, Owen Brown’s newly assigned Community Resource Officer under the county’s C.O.P.S. program.
- Provided input to CA’s Capital Projects team on the Lake Elkhorn Smooth Path play area replacement.
- Provided feedback on CA’s new Lake Elkhorn wayfinding signage installation.

Notable county and CA projects underway or completed in Owen Brown this year include: the Cradlerock Park renovation behind the East Columbia Library, CA’s replacement of the Lake Elkhorn downstream bridge, new wayfinding signage around the lake, and a new bioretention project at Lake Elkhorn currently under construction. Construction is anticipated to begin on Cradlerock Way and Dobbin Road Complete Streets projects later this year.

### Events & Community Engagement

- Staff planned and executed 25 events in FY26 ,with strong attendance across a diverse range of programs serving residents of all ages.
- Highest-attended events included the Pool Party, Election Day Bounce to the Ballot, Annual Shred Night, Bingo & Bites, Pumpkin Painting and Holiday Bingo.
- The Annual Carnival was cancelled due to adverse weather, but staff quickly repurposed vendor reservations toward a new Election Day community festival — Bounce to the Ballot — which drew 135 attendees and meaningfully boosted village election turnout.
- Launched a community photo calendar contest, with 33 participants.
- Hosted an Ice Cream Social with board members, giving residents an informal opportunity to connect with their elected representatives.
- The OB CARES group continued its volunteer efforts around Lake Elkhorn, including an Adopt-a-Spot invasive plant removal and native planting at the boat ramp.

### Communications

Staff significantly expanded OBCA’s communications reach this year. The e-newsletter subscriber list grew from 146 to 440, Facebook followers reached 1,600, and Instagram followers grew to 420. The printed *OBserver* continues to reach 3,200+ households 10 times per year. Staff also launched [linktr.ee/owenbrownvillage](http://linktr.ee/owenbrownvillage) page for easy access to all OBCA resources and built out a dedicated events page and document library on the website.

### Board Objectives

The Board completed the following set objectives in FY26:

- Provide meaningful budget input to Howard County.
- Provide meaningful budget input to Columbia Association.
- Meet with county representatives.
- Review local project status & continue community advocacy.
- Create and track milestones for manager objectives.
- Chair provides monthly *OBserver* update (most issues).

Objectives that were discussed but not completed include:

- Board members attend OBCA events.
- Discuss election policy update, pass changes if needed.
- Discuss donation policy, update Board P&P if needed.
- Create “New Resident Welcome” group.

# Columbia Association Owen Brown Representative Annual Report to Members for FY2026

**Michael Golibersuch, Owen Brown Columbia Council Representative**

Columbia Association continues to play a fundamental role in making our community an attractive and enjoyable place to live, work, and play. During Fiscal Year 2026, CA continued to provide our community:

- 3,600 acres of open space
- 94 miles of pathways with 266 pedestrian bridges
- 168 Play Areas (tot lots)
- 23 outdoor pools
- 5 indoor pools including the Swim Center
- Ice Rink
- three fitness clubs
- two golf courses
- indoor and outdoor tennis and pickleball
- Sports Park with batting cages and mini golf
- Skate Park
- Columbia Art Center
- Youth & Teen Center
- Columbia Maryland Archives
- Over 100 free events including movie nights, summer concerts, family days, cultural events, and more

There is an enormous amount of behind the scenes work needed to provide those amenities and services. CA has an annual budget of over \$90M and is powered by approximately 1,400 employees who provide the services, maintain the infrastructure, update the IT systems, environmental stewardship, engage the community, and oversee the finances needed to deliver these benefits to the community.

## **Open Space**

While its easy to take for granted, maintaining our open space is a large effort. CA has a 52-person Open Space team plus 21 in Capital Improvements, and 5 employees working on Sustainability initiatives to keep all of it functioning, supported by an FY26 operating budget of roughly \$24 million across the division. Their routine work includes 18–36 turf cuts per location per year, monument bed and meadow maintenance, leaf blowing and pathway sweeping, lake vegetation management, invasive species management, tree planting, tree care and pruning, trash and litter removal, and snow-and-ice response for facilities and parking. They also operate, inspect, and maintain 300 pieces of major mechanical equipment and CA's entire vehicle fleet, and they support roughly 100 community events annually through setup, equipment, and cleanup. Representative high-lights include:

- Lake Kittamaqundi dredging completed, with 21,000 cubic yards of sediment removed
- 1,075 native trees planted in calendar-year 2025; 4,602 plants and 1,148 envelopes of native seed distributed to residents through community giveaways.
- 77 invasive plant management sites treated, and 38 Early Detection Rapid Response sites preventing an estimated \$38,000 in future remediation costs.
- 1,717 volunteer hours logged through Weed Warriors, Stream Waders, and 48 active Adopt-A-Spots.
- Natural Resources Stewardship Plan launched with active community stakeholder input.
- New bioretention facility and pollinator garden at Lake Elkhorn.

## OB Columbia Council Representative Annual Report, *continued from page 5*

### Free Events

CA produces and supports roughly 100 community events per year. Each one requires coordination across Community Operations (setup, equipment, sanitation, grounds restoration), Marketing & Communications (promotion, vendor coordination), Event Operations, and partner village associations.

- Lakefront Live summer series launched with a Block Party including food trucks, a Shamarr Allen performance, and CA's first beer garden.
- Day of Dance Lakefront Live event drew ~5,000 attendees.
- Inaugural Pride in July with Howard County PFLAG drew thousands for performances and a color parade around Lake Kittamaquundi.
- Lakefest featured the Art Center's annual Umbrella Show with 62 community-made umbrellas.
- CA supported the annual Juneteenth Celebration, Columbia Festival of the Arts, Back-to-School Bash, and 4th of July parades in River Hill, Longfellow, and at the Lakefront.
- Multiple free movies and concerts at the lake front.

### Fitness

CA operates three fitness clubs - Columbia Athletic Club, Columbia Gym, and Supreme Sports Club - with roughly 18,000 paid fitness memberships, and over 55,000 total members annually using the fitness amenities. The Wellness & Fitness division accounts for about \$12.6M in revenue and \$12.5M in operating expenses annually. Day-to-day operations include group exercise, personal training, youth fitness, equipment maintenance, locker rooms, and ongoing instructor certification.

- 8 fitness leaders earned the John W. Brick Mental Health Foundation Mental Well-Being Certification (20-hour evidence-based program).
- 19 team members completed an 8-hour Barbell Intensive Workshop; Cardio Tennis and TRX/Cardio Tennis certifications added.
- Group Fitness rolled out a redesigned Tribe/TRX and Move to Live More group training program; hosted Les Mills BodyPump and Core master classes.
- Columbia Gym launched expanded Pickleball with three dedicated courts in the Adult Arena.
- Stop the Bleed training equipped 20+ residents; Red Cross blood drive at Supreme collected 32 pints (8 first-time donors).
- CA's pathway system formally recognized in Howard County's Photovoice Exhibition as a community asset for walkability and well-being.

### Aquatics

CA operates 23 outdoor neighborhood pools, five indoor pools including the Swim Center, and the Splash Down water playground. Opening all 23 pools by Memorial Day weekend is a CA-wide effort involving Aquatics, Construction & Facilities, Capital Improvements, Open Space, and Community Operations. The Aquatics team trains roughly 75% of new staff each spring and logs 3,000+ hours of lifeguard training annually. FY26 budget is approximately \$8.4M in operating expenses against \$3.9M in direct revenue; the balance is funded through membership allocations.

- Independent Ellis lifeguard audit in June 2025 produced CA's highest scores since 2021, with all skill audits "Exceeding Standards."
- Columbia Neighborhood Swim League grew to ~2,500 swimmers; All-City meet brought 3,000+ swimmers, families, and coaches to Phelps Luck for 77 events over two days.
- New patio and shade structure at Swansfield Pool; new main pool filter at Phelps Luck.
- MacGill's Common Water Playground/Bath House advancing through design; Clemens Crossing Pool Bath House in construction.
- New scheduling software adopted to improve operational efficiency.

## OB Columbia Council Representative Annual Report, *continued from page 6*

### Sports

CA's Sports division operates two golf courses (Hobbit's Glen and Fairway Hills), the Columbia Ice Rink, the SportsPark (batting cages and mini golf), the Skate Park, indoor and outdoor tennis at Long Reach and Owen Brown, indoor and outdoor pickleball, and league programming (basketball, racquetball, USTA, pickleball). The division also supports the Junior Tennis Pathway, The First Tee of Howard County, Huskies Youth Hockey, Columbia Figure Skating Club, and Learn-to-Skate. Staff maintain golf greens, ice surface, courts, and equipment year-round.

- Columbia Ice Rink set an all-time Learn-to-Skate record with 692 participants in January; 29 in the Instructional Hockey program.
- Ice Rink hosted inaugural Winter Games event; received new scoreboard and ADA-compliant bottle-filler.
- 48 junior tennis players from CA's Junior Tennis Pathway made HCPSS high school teams for 2026 - the highest in three years.
- Hobbit's Glen and Fairway Hills Turkey Shoots drew 250 participants — largest turnout in recent history.
- New fleet of golf carts at Hobbit's Glen for the 2026 Opening Day Tournament.
- Indoor/Outdoor Tennis on pace to finish FY26 with a positive net contribution.

### Art, Multi-cultural, and Youth and Teen

This grouping of services includes the Columbia Art Center, Multicultural Programs, Columbia Maryland Archives, School Age Services, the Youth & Teen Center, and Camps. School Age Services runs licensed before- and after-school care in HCPSS elementary and middle schools and is on pace for \$2.0M in tuition revenue through Q3 (+14% over prior year). Camps ran all summer (Camp Extra, Nature Camp, Art Camp) averaging about 25 children per week. The Art Center, Multicultural Programs, and Archives operate as community programs rather than revenue centers, supported through membership allocations and the annual charge.

- Newly renovated Columbia Art Center reopened in spring 2025; new gas kiln debuted and ceramics enrollment doubled.
- Art Center hosted the Congressional Youth Art Competition (30 high-school works, awards presented by Rep. Sarah Elfreth).
- Visionary Women exhibit featured 80 local female artists for Women's History Month.
- Annual HCPSS partnership exhibition displayed 250 K-12 student works.
- Multicultural Programs delivered Bollywood Bash (160 attendees), Afrobeats Bash (130), Heritage Unplugged Multicultural Open Mic, and Around the World Storytime.
- Multicultural Programs convened an Immigrant Community Focus Group with leaders from HCPS, La Alianza, PATH, Luminus, and the State Comptroller's office.
- Columbia Maryland Archives welcomed its fourth annual cohort of HCC students for the Summer Field School; published new online exhibit on the Columbia Children's Petting Zoo.
- School Age Services secured Maryland State Department of Education approval to expand capacity at Atholton Elementary; two more schools in process.
- Youth & Teen Center launched a Cooking Club; partnered with Prepare for Success to distribute 40 backpacks.

### Finances

CA administers 26,954 Annual Charge invoices totaling \$51.8M, processes \$34M+ in Community Programs & Services revenue, runs payroll for ~1,400 employees, and manages ~\$5.7M in annual debt service, \$16M in emergency cash reserves, and a multi-year capital reinvestment plan. The Finance team is supported by IT, Procurement, Customer Care, Audit & Advisory Services, and the Office of General Counsel. Customer Care handles ~50,000 calls, emails, and walk-in inquiries per year.

- Through Q3 of FY26: YTD revenue \$79.5M vs. \$77.8M budgeted (+3%); YTD expenses \$60.0M vs. \$64.0M budgeted (-6%).
- Instituted a new capital budgeting process that will yield better financial management.
- Annual Charge rate held at \$0.68 and 3.5% cap unchanged.
- \$5,000 HFA Foundation Community Innovation Grant awarded for the CA Points affordability program.
- \$125,000 grant authorized to the Community Foundation of Howard County for nonprofit subgrants.

## **OB Columbia Council Representative Annual Report,** *continued from page 7*

### **Governance**

CA took several steps to improve governance and make the organization more professional and efficient over FY26. Highlights include:

- Extended the contract of CEO Shawn MacInnes through FY31 ensuring institutional stability.
- Instituted a standardized CEO Evaluation system (previously a new system was recreated each year).
- Initiated Long Term Capital planning to plan for the refurbishment and/or development of aging assets.
- Revamped ethics policies and processes to hold ourselves to higher levels of accountability.
- Streamlined decades of sprawling policy into consolidated policy documents.
- Held two town halls to increase engagement between residents, board, and senior staff.
- Developed a new business capability model for CA to aid in developing synergies across the organization.

### **Challenges**

There are several challenges that face CA:

- **Aging infrastructure.** CA is almost 60 years old and the average age of our facilities is over 45 years (not counting the facilities built in the 19th century). CA faces rising costs with maintaining aging facilities or large investments to rebuild them. This will require prudent borrowing.
- **Rising Costs.** CA's expenses – due to a combination economic factors include inflation, tariffs, and (most significantly) rising labor costs- are growing faster than revenue. While currently in sound financial position, this trend is not sustainable. In the next few years, CA will need to cut services, reduce maintenance of assets, raise revenue, or take a hybrid approach.
- **Governance.** CA is governed by 10 volunteer board members who serve in a mix of one- or two-year terms. They are often elected in uncontested elections or by a handful of votes. There are no qualifications required to be a board member. This has created an unstable dynamic in CA's highest level of governance and cost the community time and money.

Those challenges notwithstanding, Columbia remains an excellent place to live because of Columbia Association and it will remain a great place for the foreseeable future.

