



DEB'S DISTRICT UPDATE

Deb Jung • District Four

Our weather has been beautiful this week, we are making progress on vaccines and, thanks to the American Rescue Plan, Howard County will be receiving \$63 million dollars in the very near future — all good news for Howard County residents.

The County Council keeps chugging along, as you will see in the next few pages where we review recent legislation. In addition, the County Executive and the Department of Planning and Zoning have been going full steam ahead on the development of a new General Plan. The General Plan, updated once every 10 years, establishes a clear policy on how and where the County will develop and grow as it adjusts to evolving economic, environmental, and social conditions. It is the basis for land-use decisions made by the Planning Board, County Council, and Zoning Board and informs County plans, policies, regulations, and budgets.

My wish list for the new General Plan includes increased emphasis on land reservations for new schools to ensure that we are not constantly dealing with overcapacity issues; an honest evaluation of our road and transit infrastructure that looks to the future and plans for accessible and useful public transit; set asides for affordable housing, not just apartments, but housing that provides a pathway to homeownership and doesn't further concentrate poverty within high-poverty schools; and protection of Columbia's unique zoning regulations that have created a town where the scenic experience is as important as retail convenience. More information about the General Plan and how to get involved is on page 9 of this newsletter. Please let your voice be heard!

Stay in touch and stay healthy.

Deb

Subscribe to my newsletter [here](#)

County Council Updates

FEBRUARY-MARCH LEGISLATION

The following bills were introduced on February 3 and voted on March 1. The Council continues to see Zoning Regulation Amendments (ZRA) ahead of the upcoming General Plan and Comprehensive Zoning process. Making project-specific decisions through the legislative process does not make good long-range planning sense. Because these ZRAs are destined to pass, I often sponsor amendments to mitigate or improve as best as possible.

Councilmember's Legislation

CB8/ZRA 193: Amends the Zoning Regulations for Corridor Activity Center (CAC) zoned properties. *Passed as Amended*

The CAC zones were initially designed to promote pedestrian-oriented, mixed developments (residential, office, and retail) within the non-industrial portions of Route 1. In 2004, CAC was applied all along Route 1 and enabled the shift away from industrial warehouses and light manufacturing to residential.

After reviewing the legislative history of CAC, I realized that previous ZRAs systematically reduced community benefit requirements, from amenity areas, setbacks, retail options, or more. This zoning overlay has increasingly become a residential rezoning tool in one of the few commercial corridors in the County. In order to stay economically viable,

we can not just be a bedroom community and we need large tracts of land for job centers and campuses near highways. The CAC zone prior to this legislation doesn't achieve that goal but further reducing the commercial requirements for a specific project in the midst of the General Plan is an egregious example of spot zoning and legislative favoritism.

The most significant alteration to CAC was CB2-2016 (ZRA-156) that reduced the commercial requirements in exchange for a fee-in-lieu payment to the Economic Development Authority for commercial development in viable locations. The petitioner (Howard Square) requested the commercial space reduction because the requirement attracted sub-par tenants.

CB8-2021 goes one step further in allowing more commercial buydown to below the 20-square feet per dwelling unit and elimination of a market study to support the buydown request. During the Worksession on February 22, the attorney for the petitioner stated that the fee-in-lieu needed to be further reduced to \$25 per square foot or the deal would be terminated.

A subsequent amendment by Councilmember Dr. Opel Jones (Amendment 1) reduced this fee to \$25 per square foot in addition to other specific requests suggested at the Worksession by the petitioner.

Council Legislation: Click [here](#).

County Council Updates

I sponsored an amendment (Amendment 2) that would expand community benefit requirements in exchange for the commercial buy-down and require the unused square footage to be used for amenity areas already defined in the Code. Amenity areas could include community centers, playgrounds, paths, and other gathering places.

Councilmember Christiana Rigby sponsored an amendment to Amendment 2 that watered down those options to include “open space,” which requires no investment or enhancements from the developer. Amendment 2 as amended passed. I voted against the amended bill.

CB13 Single-use Plastics: Requires notice or request for certain single-use plastics in food service settings, Christiana Rigby; *Passed as Amended*

While I was pleased to vote in favor of a bill that reduces single-use plastics in an effort to reduce landfill waste, I also believe that it is important to adequately support struggling restaurants through the challenging times of

COVID-19. Carry out has been a significant alternative for restaurants to survive social gathering restrictions. Reducing food service waste and shifting consumer habits are all essential for a healthy planet but it needs to be legislated in a way that produces real outcomes and avoids additional financial hardships. Click [here](#) for more about the debate that preceded the vote.

CB14 Tenant-Landlord Leases: Alters lease termination requirements, model showings, and legal fees, David Yungmann; *Tabled*

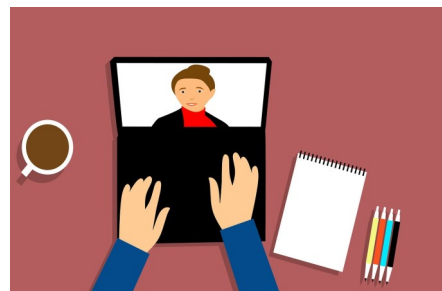
County Executive’s Legislation

CB11 Police Lease: Adds additional space to rented offices at Symphony Woods; *Passed*

CB12 Board & Commissions: Changes member terms in the County Code to match Charter changes; *Passed*

CR34 Economic development Loan: Authorizes a State loan to KBR Wyle; *Passed*

CR35 Councilmanic Redistricting Commission: Requires redistricting plan to be presented to the County Council on September 2, 2021; *Ta-*



UPCOMING COUNCIL SCHEDULE

March 15, 9:30am — Joint Meeting with BOE

March 16, 4pm — Councilmanic Redistricting Commission

March 15, 7pm — Legislative Public Hearing

March 17, 1pm — Legislative Work Session

Council Legislation: Click [here](#).

While the Council meetings continue to be virtual, we are here for you. Please reach out to us at 410-313-2001 or djung@howardcountymd.gov.

MARCH-APRIL LEGISLATION

Councilmember's Legislation

CB19 Agricultural Preservation Subdivision:

Removes the minimum size criteria for a landowner's dwelling; David Yungmann;

CB20 Gender-Free Bathrooms: Requires single-user bathrooms to be accessible to all; Christiana Rigby

CB21/ZRA 196 Historic District: Adds other conditional uses to historic districts

CB22 TOD Moderate Income Units: Requires in-situ MIHU in Transit Oriented Districts; Christiana Rigby

CB23 Aging-in-Place Tax Credit: Expands qualification to 35 years in one residence from 40 years; Deb Jung & Opel Jones

CB24 ZRA Prohibitions: Prevents considera-

tion of ZRAs one year prior to the General Plan; Liz Walsh

CR43 Shared Streets: Encourages the County Executive to use public roads for outdoor spaces during the state of Emergency; Liz Walsh

County Executive's Legislation

CB16 Agricultural Preservation Purchase:

Buys development rights from a horse farm on McKendree Road

CB17 Commercial Solar: Allows solar collectors (ground mount and rooftop structures) in certain zoning districts and agricultural preservation parcels.

CB18 Transit & Pedestrian Advisory Group:

Moves this advisory group into the larger Multimodal Transportation Board.

Racial Equity Taskforce

The County Council-sponsored taskforce is divided into six subgroups, all of which held their first meetings in December. Meetings have been recorded and are available online. Click [here](#) for more.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Date & Time	Subgroup
March 15, 4pm	Legislative Process
March 17, 6pm	Public Health and Environmental Policy
March 18, 5pm	Personal and Public Safety
March 22, 4:30pm	Education
April 5, 5pm	Education
April 6, 4pm	Land Use and Housing Policy
April 7, 6pm	Economic and Workforce Development

General Assembly 2021

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 442nd session of the Maryland General Assembly convened in Annapolis, Maryland, on January 13 and will be in session through April 12.

Click on the Committee name for State Senate meetings:

[Budget & Taxation](#) | [Education, Health & Environment Affairs](#) | [Finance](#) | [Judicial Proceedings](#)



Click on the Committee name for House meetings: [Appropriations](#) | [Economic Matters](#) | [Environment & Transportation](#) | [Health & Government Operations](#) | [Judiciary](#) | [Ways & Means](#)

HOWARD COUNTY DELEGATION

Local Bills: Click [here](#).

Upcoming Meetings: None currently scheduled

Live stream: Click [here](#). Select Today's Calendar. Click on the arrow next to Committee Meetings under Other, and then select Howard. Click on the red "Live!" button, which will open the streaming video on YouTube once the meeting goes live.

Click [here](#) for more General Assembly news from MACo (Maryland Association of Counties).

Howard County COVID Update

CDC GUIDELINES FOR VACCINATED INDIVIDUALS

On March 7, the CDC issued updated social-gathering guidelines for fully vaccinated people that include the following. Those who are fully vaccinated can:

- visit with other vaccinated people indoors without masks or distancing
- visit with unvaccinated family members indoors if COVID risks are low
- continue to wear masks and social distance in public
- refrain from testing or quarantining if exposed to a COVID-positive person
- avoid medium to large gatherings

EASING COUNTY RESTRICTIONS

Following Governor Hogan's announcement on March 9th relaxing COVID restrictions, the County Executive has determined that Howard County will follow state guidance allowing most businesses, including retail, fitness, religious facilities, personal services, casinos, bingo halls, bowling alleys and outdoor and indoor dining at restaurants and bars to fully open. Mask usage indoors, outdoors when distancing is not possible, and indoor social distancing requirements will still be in place so most will not be able to go back to a full 100% capacity.

VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

With the approval of the Johnson & Johnson one-dose vaccine, some of which is being manufactured in Maryland, many officials are optimistic that supplies will be more effectively and efficiently distributed. The Governor also announced the opening of additional mass vaccination sites in a press conference on March 2.

Click [here](#) for more.



Local legislators and Health Departments have been asking the State's Health Department for more specific

data on vaccine distribution to the various outlets. Recently the State Health Department provided the following responses to questions asked by members of the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo).

- Where is the vaccine going? *Summary charts of vaccine allocation by county and hospital can be found [here](#).*
- What are the equity requirements for the private vaccine providers? *CVS and Walgreens are part of the CDC Federal Retail Pharmacy Program and locations in Maryland are receiving vaccine allocations directly from the Federal government. Click [here](#) for more.*

The Baltimore Sun provided additional details about vaccine allocation and distribution to minority communities (March 3, "Who's getting COVID vaccine doses in Maryland?"). The article stated that "white Marylanders are receiving nearly four times as many doses of vaccines as Black residents. ...Baltimore City, Charles County and Prince George's County — all majority-Black jurisdictions — had the lowest percentages of both people who had received the first dose of the vaccine, as well as those who are fully vaccinated with both doses."

Click [here](#) for more.

EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

Is Howard County distributing vaccine equitably? I've asked at the monthly updates with the County Health Department and the County Executive about the plans to bring the vaccines to underserved communities, including Harpers Choice and Wilde Lake. The County Executive announced on March 8 an expansion of the Mobile Integrated Community Health unit and \$1 million in outreach grants. Click [here](#) for more.

Click [here](#) to view the March 8 Howard County Council meeting discussing the vaccination program with the County's Health Department Director Dr. Rossman.

COVID Vaccine Updates



There are so many options available to register for vaccines that it can get confusing. Here is some information that will make scheduling your vaccination much easier. First, it's important to know if you're currently eligible to receive a vac-

cine. To determine eligibility, click [here](#) and answer the questions; or click [here](#) to view current eligible groups. Currently, Maryland is in Phase 1C. If you're eligible, the next step is to find an available appointment. Distribution options include the Howard County Health Department, a few local pharmacies, and State mass vaccination sites.

HOWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

In case you missed it, the Health Department is accepting vaccine pre-registration for all priority groups. By filing out the Health Department's pre-registration form, you are supplying your contact information to the Department so that you can be notified when appointments are available. Remember, you only need to pre-register once to get on the appointment notification list. Click [here](#) to pre-register. For questions, contact the Health Department's vaccine information line at 410-313-6284.

RETAIL & MASS VACCINATION SITES

CLICK— Click [here](#) for the Maryland Vaccination Site Finder. Enter your zip code and click FIND A VACCINATION SITE. Near the top of the page you can change your search radius up to 50 miles. Your search results will include information about all vaccine sites (including retail) and registration information.

CALL— **855-MD-GO-VAX (855-634-6829)** from 7am to 10pm. I have heard that many people are having better luck getting through on the phone lines, although the wait may be lengthy. you can also use this option to make appointments for multiple people.

TEXT— **MDReady** to **898-211** to receive text alerts when appointments become available.

ASK THE CROWD —A Facebook page called

“Maryland Vaccine Hunters” helps locate vaccine appointments for those who have run out of patience with the process. Members post advice and success stories. This page is not sponsored by a Health Department or the State; it's simply people helping people.

State mass vaccination sites:

- **Six Flags America**, Prince Georges County
- **M&T Bank Stadium**, Baltimore City
- **Baltimore Convention Center**, Baltimore City
- **Regency Furniture Stadium**, Waldorf
- **Wicomico Youth & Civic Center**, Salisbury (opening by March 18th)
- **Hagerstown Premium Outlets**, Hagerstown (opening the end of March)

Fiscal Year 2022 Budget

It is that time of year again, when the County begins its planning and budgeting process for the next fiscal year that begins in July.



STEPS IN THE PROCESS

School Funding Requests to the State: Throughout the preceding year, the County Council approves legislation for BOE-approved Capital projects and the Long Range Master Plan that are submitted to the State's Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) for funding recommendations. On February 22, the IAC announced preliminary pledges of \$28.6 million out of the County's requested \$40.3 million for school construction projects. The priority projects include Hammond High School renovation and addition (\$5.37 million), Talbott Springs Elementary replacement (\$8.2 million), and High School #13 (\$15 million).

Bond Rating Review: The County Executive, Council Chair, and the Budget and Finance Department Directors meet with representatives from national credit-rating agencies for a review of the County's fiscal standing. This year's review resulted in a AAA rating that secures lower interest borrowing power.

Spending Affordability Advisory Committee Report: This citizen advisory group issued its annual report after analyzing the County's borrowing capabilities. The report cautioned that spending requests outpace resources amid slower economic growth. In the Capital Budget, for example, years of deferring sufficient funds for maintenance of infrastructure (including roads, storm drainage, and systemic renovation of facilities) throughout the County have created significant backlogs. Through neglect, maintenance that should fall in the operating budget category becomes Capital projects requiring replacement. Click [here](#) for more.

HCPSS Budget: The Board of Education approved the proposed FY2022 Capital Budget and FY 2023-2027 Capital Improvement Program and submitted it to the County Executive for review. Click [here](#) for more.

Budget Delivery to the County Council: The Capital Budget is due to the Council by April 1, followed by a budget presentation by the County Executive, public hearings, and worksessions. The Operating Budget follows by April 22. The final Budget vote occurs on May 26.

Click [here](#) for the County Council's FY2022 Budget calendar.

HoCo By Design: General Plan

The General Plan, updated once every 10 years, establishes a clear policy on how and where the County will develop and grow as it adjusts to evolving economic, environmental, and social conditions. It is the basis for land use decisions made by the Planning Board, County Council, and Zoning Board and informs County plans, policies, regulations, and budgets. The Department of Planning and Zoning invites residents to share their visions for Howard County through the following input opportunities. Click [here](#) for more.

Initial recommendations and observations from the process have been assembled into seven Physical Assessment reports. Click [here](#) for more.

- **Register:** Provide your input and be added to the email list.
- **[What Makes Howard County a Special Place?:](#)** Share your thoughts.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Growth Choices Workshops will present four different scenarios for the future of the County. Register to attend one of four virtual meetings to learn about the proposed scenarios and offer feedback.

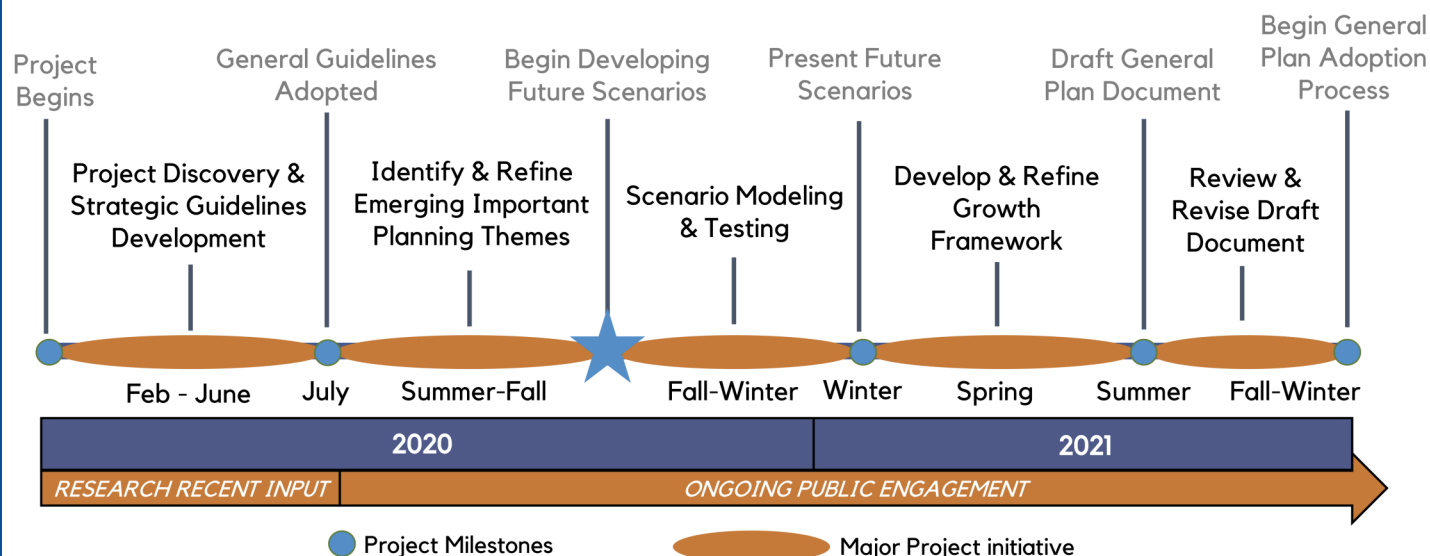
March 22 at 12pm; click [here](#).

March 22 at 7pm; click [here](#).

March 23 at 4pm; click [here](#).

March 25 at 7pm; click [here](#).

HOCO BY DESIGN PROJECT SCHEDULE



School News

SCHOOL REOPENING

On March 1, HCPSS reopened to the general school population using a hybrid model with students attending school in-person two days a week and online the remaining days. In an effort to ensure proper distancing, half of the students attend school in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays and the other half attend on Thursdays and Fridays. Families also have the option to continue with online education through the remainder of the school year. Students are being phased in by grade through the week of April 12.

Click [here](#) for more.

STUDENT HYBRID IN-PERSON MODEL

Week of March 1	Students identified for the 5-days-per-week program
Week of March 15	Students in grades preK-2
Week of March 29	Students in grades 3-5, 6, 9, 12 & students who participate in Career and Technical Education at ARL
Week of April 12	Students in grades 7-8 & 10-11

VACCINATIONS

As of March 11, more than 90% of HCPSS educators have received at least their first dose or are scheduled for their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. Approximately 9,300 HCPSS employees requested the vaccine. HCPSS is anticipating an additional 300 doses provided by Johns Hopkins Medicine, and once administered, these additional doses are expected to bring the HCPSS staff vaccination percentage closer to 95%.

SCHOOL MEALS

Starting March 1, students returning in-person can receive school meals any day they are in school. Click [here](#) for a schedule for meal pick-up for students who have not yet returned to in-person school.

HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATION

Dr. Martirano announced at the January 7 Board of Education meeting that HCPSS is planning on in-person senior activities as best as possible. The window for the 2021 graduation ceremonies will be May 24 to May 28, and June 1 to June 11. More details will follow.

SCHOOL BUSES

BEWARE! Cameras have been placed on Howard County school buses to snap photos of car license plates when drivers illegally pass a bus that is stopped for children. The fine for illegally passing a stopped school bus will be \$250 starting April 1. Please drive safely.

Community News



Howard County Recreation & Parks @HoCoRec · Feb 23



Howard County Recreation & Parks is saddened to announce the passing of Recreation Bureau Chief Laura Wetherald. A gifted recreation professional and thoughtful friend, Laura brought warmth and enthusiasm to the lives of her coworkers and colleagues.



VILLAGE NEWS

[Wilde Lake](#)

[Harper's Choice](#)

[Hickory Ridge](#)

[River Hill](#)

[Town Center](#)



Community News

BLOOD DONATIONS NEEDED



The American Red Cross now faces a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Healthy individuals are needed now to donate to help patients counting on lifesaving blood. Click [here](#) for more.

BEHIND ON YOUR BGE BILL?

Service termination should be a last resort. If you have a past-due balance, BGE can arrange a payment plan. Click [here](#) for more.

GRASSROOTS NEEDS YOUR HELP

Grassroots provides 24-hour crisis intervention and support to individuals and families dealing with mental health issues, substance use, or homelessness. Grassroots continue to serve Howard County's most vulnerable people during these difficult times and ask for your assistance in the following ways:

- Send a financial donation.
- Donate food items.
- Make a meal.
- Fill the pantry.

Click [here](#) for more.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS & APPLICATIONS

- Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities

Deadline March 26

The County Executive is currently seeking applications specifically from the business community. Click [here](#) for more.

- 2021 Community Sports Hall of Fame

Deadline April 15

Howard County's Department of Recreation & Parks is now accepting nominations. Click [here](#) for more.

NORTH COLUMBIA FIRE STATION

A virtual community meeting has been scheduled for March 25 at 7pm to discuss the construction of the North Columbia Fire Station (Capital Project F-5976). Details to follow.

A promotional graphic for the Community Action Council of Howard County. The top section features the organization's logo (a heart with hands) and the text "Community Action Council of Howard County" and "HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES." Below this is a photograph of several hands holding a small red box. To the right of the photo, a teal box contains the text "1 in 4 Howard County residents need a helping hand." and a list of services: "CAC provides: Early Childhood Education, Energy Assistance, Food Assistance, Housing Assistance." At the bottom of the graphic, a teal bar says "GET SUPPORT or GET INVOLVED NOW" and a dark blue bar contains contact information: "Contact Us 410-313-6440 • www.cac-hc.org" and a QR code.

Upcoming Events

Where's the Craic? St. Patrick's Event

March 20, 12pm-6pm, free

“Craic” is Irish for “a good time.” Celebrate St. Patrick’s Day with traditional Irish music and Irish dancers in the eatery area in the New Weave Building at Historic Savage Mill.



12-12:30pm: Teelin Irish Dance Company

12:45-1:15pm: Culkin School of Irish Dance

1:30-5:30pm: Gary Eurice, Traditional Celtic

“LOVE/language,” a Virtual Theatre Event

Rep Stage, Howard Community College

March 26–29, tickets \$15/\$25 single/household

Rep Stage opens its 28th season with a world premiere – “LOVE/language – a collection of original works by regional area playwrights. From romantic love to self-love, from the love of family to love of our communities, we are all connected in some way through the language of one of humankind's most intimate emotions. With deeply personal monologues, “LOVE/language” explores how love can help us connect and heal in a time when isolation and unrest affect our daily lives. Click [here](#) for more.

Civil War Battlefields of Maryland

Howard County Historical Society

April 2, tickets \$5

Fred Campbell, Director of FFC Historical Tours and Historian, will present the society’s next Lunch Lecture Series. Click [here](#) for more.

Racial Equity Training Opportunity

Howard County Library System

March & April

Deepen your understanding of racial equity with nationally renowned trainers from the Racial Equity Institute, Soul Focused Group, and Equity Matters. A series of free, one-day and two-day trainings will be offered. Click [here](#) to register a one-day session or [here](#) for a two-day session.

Keeping Up With Deb



Wilde Lake– Beaverbrook Stream Restoration Tour



I had the opportunity to meet with residents of Wilde Lake and Beaverbrook to talk about stream restoration in the area. Thank you to Mark Richmond with the Department of Public Works, John McCoy with Columbia Association, and Terry Matthews with Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy for lending their expertise to the discussion.

The next steps involve seeking grant funding to support a project that would stabilize the streams and reduce sediment run-off. I asked for funding assistance for the project at the County Executive’s Residents’ Budget Hearing on March 9.



Thank you to the **Women’s Giving Circle** for highlighting me (and many other women) for being S(Heroes) who work diligently to make a difference in Howard County. During Women’s History Month it is so important to recognize the accomplishments and contributions that women make in our community each and every day.

