



DEB'S DISTRICT UPDATE

Deb Jung • District Four

July 2024

Greetings

I hope that many of you are enjoying vacations and finding ways to stay cool. It has been a hot summer earning the unfavorable superlative of having some of the hottest days on Earth.

These past two months have been busier than usual. Late June brought groundbreakings for the North Laurel Pool at the North Laurel Community Center and the long-awaited North Tunnel, to divert floodwaters in Old Ellicott City. I celebrated Juneteenth at the Lakefront, HoCo Pride at ColorBurst Park and the Dragon Boat Festival in Ellicott City. July kicked off with Longfellow's annual Fourth of July parade, which is always a great way to celebrate the holiday. This year I was honored to serve as the Grand Marshall. I'm pictured here in my red, white, and blue with former County Executive Liz Bobo and her husband Lloyd Knowles, two faithful parade fans for many years.



Our Legislative Sessions have been busy with appointments to the County's various Boards and Commissions. I encourage all of you to take a look at the Boards and Commissions web page to see if you might be interested in volunteering; click [here](#) for more. Every month I am amazed at the number of people in Howard County who have the expertise, education, and desire to serve our community. It is truly a pleasure to hear from these dedicated residents and I hope that you too will consider getting involved in this way.

Deb

Council Updates

July

Legislation for this month was introduced on July 1 and will be voted on July 29. The Council is in recess for the month of August.

CB46 Citizens' Election Fund The Citizens' Election Fund Commission proposed these changes to address State campaign finance issues and implementation problems that arose in the previous election cycle. Highlights include:

- allowing a candidate to keep a CEF campaign account open for a period of time with a \$5,000 cap instead of returning unspent funds after the election. Some campaign expenses are paid after the election due to the billing cycle of the service.

Upcoming Meetings

- July 29, 10am: Legislative Session
- August recess
- September 3, 7pm: Legislative Session
- September 10, 9:30am: Monthly Meeting
- September 16, 7pm: Public Hearing
- September 24, 9:30am: Work Session
- October 7, 7pm Legislative Session

Click [here](#) for more.



- incorporating State rule changes allowing in-kind contributions from the local central committee.
- allowing candidates in an uncontested election to receive one-third of the allotted amount in a contested election.
- adjusting dollar amounts of contributions and donations to reflect inflation.

CB37 Reduce the school facilities surcharge for single-family detached dwelling

Councilmember Christiana Rigby introduced this bill to cut the current school surcharge fee from \$8.15 to \$1.32 for single-family detached homes built by an individual who owned the lot before the submission of a building permit for use as a their primary dwelling. The house could not be built by a developer, builder, group, or individual who is not the owner. Councilmember Rigby also sponsored an amendment to change references in the bill from “single-family detached dwelling” to “residential dwellings on single lots.” The implication of this change is not yet clear. The amendment allows for the individual owner to hire someone to build the house on the property.

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Current Legislation: click [here](#).

Council Updates

CB47 & CB48 Office of Inspector General

Councilmember Liz Walsh introduced two companion bills creating an Office of Inspector General (IG). An Inspector General is a watchdog position that investigates waste, fraud, and abuse in government. IGs have long served various Federal agencies and are being adopted at the local and state levels across the Country.

I firmly believe that our County desperately needs an IG and have been undertaking my own research into how to establish this role according to the industry's best practices. In speaking with the members of the IG's professional association, I learned that every jurisdiction approaches the establishment of an IG differently but the important considerations are as follows:

- independence
- adequate resources
- unrestricted access to records
- adherence to professional standards.

Charter Constraints

Our Council cannot create a truly independent office without a Charter Amendment and a subsequent ballot referendum. A Charter Amendment needs four votes to pass the Council and the deadline to propose, approve, and submit a Charter Amendment for the 2024 election is August 2.

News Flash

All five Councilmembers are sponsors of [CR107](#), a late-filed Charter Amendment to establish an independent Office of the Inspector. The legislation will be introduced and voted on at our July 29 wrap-up Legislative Session and will appear on the November 2024 ballot. Click [here](#) for more. I will cover more about this Charter Amendment in my August newsletter.

CB47 Summary

Councilmember Walsh's bill establishes an office under the Executive Branch and uses a permanent Advisory Board, appointed by the County Executive, as an oversight and hiring/firing body. Per our Charter, only the County Executive can appoint members to a standing committee. In Councilmember Walsh's bill, the Board consists of up to nine appointments (five residents of each Councilmanic District and four professionals from academia, the judicial system, or other IG agencies). The Board selects and removes the IG, conducts annual performance reviews, and sets the budget. The IG is limited to one six-year term.

The majority of Councilmember Walsh's IG bill is based on the Baltimore City model. CB47 also tasks the IG with leadership of the

View Council Sessions: click [here](#).

Council Updates

County's Ethics Commission; this commingling of roles was used in Baltimore County but was later deemed a conflict of interest and separated from each other.

IG Best Practices

In 2023, Baltimore County Executive tasked an independent group (named the Blue Ribbon Commission on Ethics and Accountability) to review and report on the best practices that should be in place to assist with the administration of their existing IG office. Here are the key recommendations from the Commission's report:

Independence of the Inspector General: The IG ordinance, along with funding requirements, should be added to the County Charter. Decreases in funding should have written justifications made available to the public.

Oversight & Accountability: The IG should not have an oversight board so as to preserve independence. The IG and staff should be subject to Human Resources disciplinary procedures to address complaints that do not rise to the level of termination. The IG's policies and procedures should be reviewed for best practices by the appropriate professional group every three to five years. The Inspector General should hold certification as a Certified Inspector General.

Scope of Responsibility & Office Staffing:

The IG should handle investigations only; there should be a separate audit office and a separate Ethics Commission. Adequate staff is needed to perform the IG functions. Independent legal counsel should be available to avoid conflicts of interest with the County Solicitor. County employees should be required to cooperate with IG investigations.

Access to Records & Subpoenas: The IG should have full and direct access to all records and the authority to subpoena documents without a waiting period to non-County entities and 30 days to County entities. Baltimore County previously had a 90 day wait period after a request.

Policies & Procedures: The IG should be required to issue written policies and procedures to ensure trust and confidence. These should cover the following:

- intake, investigations, interviews, confidentiality, whistleblower protection, and case outcomes.
- confidentiality of scheduled interviews, interview recordings, and meetings; prohibitions on outside recordings of interviews and copies of interview materials.
- investigation report drafts should be shared with relevant County Administration with a 30-day response period.

Blue Ribbon Report: click [here](#).

Council Updates

Future Assessment: Another review Commission should occur in less than five years to do a reassessment.

County Comparisons

IGs have been established in Baltimore and Montgomery Counties; Baltimore City; and within the State Board of Education. Prince Georges County has an Office of Ethics and Accountability, which is responsible for increased accountability and oversight by identifying fraud, abuse, and illegal acts and supports the Board of Ethics to exercise its authority. The IGs in Montgomery and Baltimore Counties have authority to investigate the local school system. In Montgomery County, there is a dedicated staff person assigned to

the school system, while Baltimore County requests assistance from the IG for the State Board of Education. Montgomery County's IG also performs audits of County operations.

In Howard County, the County Charter requires audits of County operations to be performed by the County Auditor. There is no specific provision in the Howard County Charter enabling investigations of fraud, waste, and abuse but there is a provision allowing for special audits approved by the Council or the County Executive.

Here is a comparison of the neighboring jurisdictions' IG offices.

IG Office	Baltimore County	Montgomery	Baltimore City
Established by	Council bill	Council bill	Charter Amendment
Appointed by	County Executive and confirmed by Council	Council from a list of names submitted by a Nominating Panel of industry experts	Mayor and confirmed by Council
Terms & term limits	Initial five year term followed by one four year term	Two four year terms	One six year term
Responsibilities	Investigate abuse, fraud, and deficiencies	Investigate fraud, waste, and abuse; conduct performance audits	Investigate fraud, financial waste, and abuse; promote efficiency

Council Updates

June-July

CR76 School Capacity Chart Every year the County Council approves the School Capacity Chart, which determines the school zones that are open or closed to new development based on the projected percentage of students attending the school and the capacity of the building. Schools that exceed the threshold are closed to development.

In District 4, Bryant Woods (131.8%) and Pointers Run (109.3%) Elementary Schools exceed capacity and are closed to development. *Sponsored by the County Executive, passed*

CR77 Housing Unit Allocation Chart Every year, the Council approves the number of units for a specific regional category. New construction projects need the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) to grant units from the qualifying category in order to proceed with the construction process. HoCo By Design: The General Plan changed the regional designations to reflect the desired growth plan for the County. New categories included Activity Centers. *Sponsored by the County Executive, passed*

Amendment 1: I sponsored an amendment to CR77 that would require DPZ to develop regulations for Activity Centers before

granting new allocations from that category. There are currently no specific Zoning Regulations for an Activity Center, which were a key component of HoCo By Design.

Activity Centers in the General Plan

There are over 150 mentions of Activity Centers in HoCo by Design and 40 of those mentions are policy statements. Activity Centers are envisioned to:

- Be safe, non-automobile pathways that connect buildings within commercial and office complexes as well as activity centers to support “park once” behavior.
- Create job opportunities through new mixed-use activity centers that serve as destinations and include a mix of uses that compliment and support one another and improve the jobs-housing balance.
- Allow redevelopment in activity centers through the Zoning Regulations to make a wide range of uses economically viable.
- Require activity center redevelopment to provide convenience retail and other local-serving amenities for the neighborhood.
- Encourage inclusive opportunities for the arts, cultural expression, and entertainment through integration of public art, cultural amenities, public gathering space, and an activated public realm.
- Provide opportunities for varying sizes of retail, restaurant, and service uses.

Legislation Search Tool: click [here](#).

Council Updates

- Evaluate one or more of the following zoning tools and incentives as potential opportunities to create missing middle housing:
 - Zoning overlays or floating zones
 - Smaller lot sizes
 - Transfer of development rights or density bonuses
 - Tax incentives
 - Flexible building size or lot coverage.
- Explore models of public-private partnerships that facilitate redevelopment of a mixed-use activity center with a mix of for-sale and rental housing.
- Consider establishing housing scenarios that support for-sale units to households making 60% or less of AMI that are financially feasible for the developers.
- Require mixed-use activity centers to reflect homeownership opportunities.
- Ensure coordination so that school capacity projects are planned in activity center areas and Gateway.
- Prioritize the orientation of commercial buildings toward the street in all new development and redevelopment.

Allocations Need Regulations

The Council learned at the June 25 Worksession that Activity Center allocations have been granted to developments along the Route 1 Corridor that are currently zoned as Corridor Activity Center (CAC). There are over 1800 CAC-zoned parcels along Route 1.

According to HoCo By Design’s Route 1/ Washington Boulevard Corridor Plan, the current CAC designation has not fulfilled its goal of developing viable mixed-use projects. CAC zones “have been predominately residential-only communities with limited retail” (page 15). HoCo By Design’s Route 1 plan also states that “within activity centers, most land uses are envisioned to change. Specifically activity centers are envisioned to include a mix of



Dedication to Liz Bobo

I recently attended a dedication to Liz Bobo at Centennial Park. She deserves so much recognition for her lifelong career in public service and community advocacy. She served two terms as a Councilmember and was the first female in the State and the County to serve as County Executive in 1986. As County Executive, she delivered the County’s first Triple A bond rating and created an award-winning General Plan, ushering in a modern approach to planning that featured growth controls to better align with public infrastructure. She went on to represent District 12B for four terms in the Maryland House of Delegates.

Council Updates

residential, open space, and commercial uses...” (page 13).

The CAC zone was recognized as a failed mixed-use district prior to HoCo By Design with the adoption of CB8-2021 that shifted the required commercial square footage to more residential space because commercial businesses were allegedly not thriving in the constrained retail space. HoCo By Design did not call for more housing in CAC but instead called for more viable mixed-

use spaces for commercial and residential developments.

Vote Outcome

Name	District	Vote
Liz Walsh	1	Absent
Opel Jones	2	No
Christiana Rigby	3	No
Deb Jung	4	Yes
David Yungmann	5	No

Police Awards Ceremony

I was so proud to attend this event on June 11. Our Police Department is among the best in the nation and today’s policing requires an incredible span of knowledge, from the laws of our County, State, and Country to human psychology as well as new technologies and bureaucratic hurdles, and shifting expectations. Congratulations to the award recipients.

- Police Officer of the Year – Corporal Kendall Brennan
- Detective of the Year – Detective Timothy Usher
- Community Service Award – Police Officer First Class Benjamin Fisher
- First Year Service Award – Police Officer Davone Harrison
- Scott Wheeler Traffic Safety Award – Police Officer First Class Kirk Brown
- Civilian of the Year – Ms. Tracy Downard
- Telecommunicator of the Year – Dispatcher First Class Christopher O’Connor Jr.
- HCPD Leadership Award – Sergeant Ryan Gregory
- Auxiliary Officer of the Year – Auxiliary Officer Thomas Lentscher
- Animal Control Volunteer of the Year – Mr. Randall Miller
- Explorer of the Year – Explorer Lieutenant Natalie Roberts



APFO Meeting Update

The Code requires a special meeting when a school or school region has reached 95% capacity utilization and is projected to exceed 110% capacity utilization within five years.

The Council discussed this topic at the June 25 Worksession (click [here](#)). Attendees included the BOE, HCPSS, and DPZ staff; a member of the County Executive’s team did not attend though a representative is specified by Code. The BOE is also required to submit a report with potential solutions to address overcrowding. Their possible remedies are included in the table below.

Bryant Woods and Clemens Crossing are projected to be overcapacity and the potential solution is a boundary review. I asked when this review will occur and was told that the BOE needs to give direction to HCPSS staff for

redistricting at the beginning of the calendar year prior to the year of redistricting implementation. With a BOE-directive in January 2025, the proposed plan would be implemented in the 2026-2027 school year. The BOE would need to request an earlier start date in order to alter the review timeline. On page 20 of the 2024 Feasibility Study, it states that TIF revenue could potentially be used for a 2030 expansion of Bryant Woods.

By 2028, several elementary schools in the Southeast will be overcrowded and the current long-range plan includes a new elementary school in 2034. A new northern elementary school is also listed as a potential solution on the list but there are no plans for a new elementary school in the northern region in the 2025-2034 master plan.

95% or greater capacity utilization in 2023 and projected to be 110% capacity utilization by 2028

School	2023 Capacity	2023 K12 Actual	2023 Utilization	2028 Capacity	2028 K-12 Projection	2028 Utilization	2023 Relos	Potential Solutions
Bollman Bridge ES	609	668	109.7%	609	685	112.5%	7	Future SE ES, boundary review
Bryant Woods ES	289	333	115.2%	289	381	131.8%	6	Boundary review
Centennial Lane ES	603	707	117.2%	603	687	113.9%	6	Future N ES, boundary review
Clemens Crossing ES	521	506	97.1%	465	543	116.8%	3	Boundary review
Hammond ES	653	739	113.2%	653	739	113.2%	2	Future SE ES, boundary review
Hanover Hills ES	810	789	97.4%	810	931	114.9%	1	Future SE ES, boundary review
Phelps Luck ES	597	670	112.2%	597	693	116.1%	6	Future N ES, boundary review
St Johns Lane ES	612	657	107.4%	612	714	116.7%	7	Future N ES, boundary review
Burleigh Manor MS	779	776	99.6%	721	819	113.6%	2	DMS/PMS additions, boundary review
Dunloggin MS	565	638	112.9%	565	648	114.7%	5	DMS addition
Folly Quarter MS	662	684	103.3%	662	735	111.0%	1	PMS addition; boundary review
Hammond MS	604	582	96.4%	604	697	115.4%	3	OMMS/MHMS additions, Boundary review
Patapsco MS	643	639	99.4%	643	750	116.6%	4	DMS/PMS additions, boundary review
Patuxent Valley MS	760	844	111.1%	760	900	118.4%	4	TVMS/MHMS additions, boundary review
Thomas Viaduct MS	740	764	103.2%	740	874	118.1%	4	OMMS addition/boundary review, TVMS addition
Marriotts Ridge HS	1615	1708	105.8%	1615	1821	112.8%	0	Addition at Centennial HS

BOE APFO Report: [click here.](#)

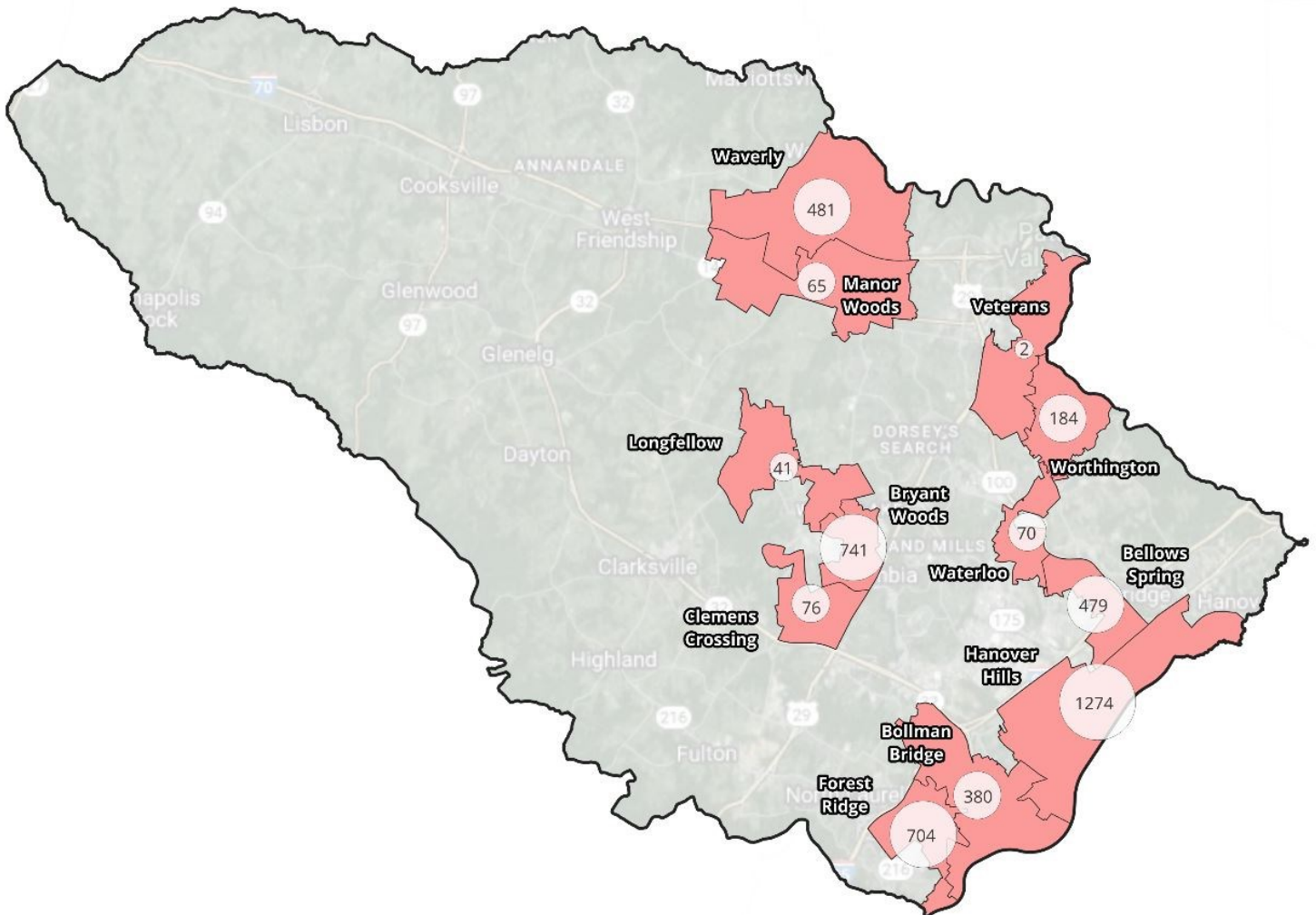
APFO Meeting Update

The map below represents the future apartment units within the currently assigned elementary school boundaries and highlights the areas of development concentration in the County. A significant number of apartments are planned for the Route One Corridor, West Columbia, and Turf Valley.

The white circle shows the number of apartment units that are planned to be built from 2023 to 2034. The following page includes a table of the names of the individual subdivi-

sion plans and their planned number of apartment units. This number of units doesn't represent the number of students expected to occupy these units. Other calculations are made by the school system to determine student yields. The reddish boundaries show the assigned elementary school.

This map was generated from data required to be reported to the Council under Section 16.1003(c)(3)(iv).



APFO Meeting Update

Number of Apartment Units (to be developed)	Name of Development	Elementary School
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Columbia West

472	Downtown Columbia (Howard Hughes)	Bryant Woods ES
174	Downtown Columbia New Cultural Center (Housing Commission)	Bryant Woods ES
95	Roslyn Rise (Enterprise)	Bryant Woods ES
76	Patuxent Commons (Housing Commission & various non-profits)	Clemens Crossing ES
41	Ranleigh Apartments (Enterprise)	Longfellow ES

Northeast

233	Weinman Apartments	Bellows Spring ES
246	Blue Stream	Bellows Spring ES
275	Wesley Grove Development	Hanover Hills ES
311	Oxford Square	Hanover Hills ES
210	Dorsey Center	Hanover Hills ES
250	Dorsey Business Center	Hanover Hills ES
2	Buch Property	Hanover Hills ES
226	Elms at Elkridge (Roberts Property)	Hanover Hills ES
2	Dorsey's Ridge	Veterans ES
70	Ellicott Gardens II (Housing Commission)	Waterloo ES
184	Taylor Highlands Ph 1 & 2	Worthington ES

Southeast

80	Unnamed	Bollman Bridge ES
300	Annapolis Junction Town Center	Bollman Bridge ES
704	Paddock Pointe	Forest Ridge ES

Northern

2	Demirel Plaza	Manor Woods ES
63	Ravenwood at Turf Valley	Manor Woods ES
194	Turf Valley	Waverly ES
95	Caperton Village at Turf Valley	Waverly ES
32	Turf Valley	Waverly ES

HCPSS

Transportation Changes

On June 6, the BOE voted to adopt a revised Policy 5200 Student Transportation. In 2025, the walk zone that does not receive busing will be reduced as follows: Click [here](#) for more.

Grade Level	Current Policy (2024-2025)	New Policy (2025-2026)
Elementary	1.0 mile	0.75 miles
Middle (6-8)	1.5 miles	1.0 mile
High (9-12)	2.0 miles	1.5 mile

2024 Feasibility Study

Each year, the Office of School Planning presents the BOE with an assessment of school capacity utilization and school capital planning options. The recommendations within this report inform the FY26 Capital Budget. Click [here](#) to read the report. Recommendations include the following capacity additions:

- Dunloggin Middle School: 233 seats, 2027
- Murray Hill Middle School: 233, 2028
- New Southeast Elementary School: 490, 2028
- Patapsco Middle School: 194, 2029
- Thomas Viaduct Middle School: 195, 2030, Centennial High School: 340, 2032
- New Northwest Elementary School: 289, 2032

The current capital plan approved by the BOE for FY25 pushes Dunloggin Middle School back by two years to make room for an addition at Oakland Mills Middle School. The remaining schools on the 2024 Feasibility recommendation list are pushed back by four years or more to make room for an addition at Oakland Mills High school in 2031.

Summer Meals

HCPSS Summer Meals Program offers free meals to students from June 24 to August 2. District 4 locations include Swansfield Elementary and Wilde Lake Middle School. Click [here](#) for more.



Congratulations Project Search Participants. This program is a one-year internship for students with disabilities in their last year of high school.

More school news: click [here](#)

County & Community Updates

WR Grace Air Permit

Comment period extended to August 29

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is soliciting public comment on an air permit application (Docket #16-23) for a pilot plant at WR Grace. According to MDE the pilot plant's emissions of regulated pollutants will not exceed threshold levels. WR Grace has been operating a research and development facility with pilot plant equipment at the Columbia site since 1957. In 1999, the company's corporate headquarters was moved here.

Denial of a permit occurs if the applicant cannot demonstrate that the proposal meets all applicable air quality requirements under the Clean Air Act.

- Permit information: click [here](#)
- Public hearing: click [here](#)
- Public comment ends July 29.
- Send comments to shanon.heafey@maryland.gov
- Inquiries about WR Grace: community@Grace.com

General Plan Citizen Groups

Here is an update on the following citizen groups called for in HoCo By Design:

- **Housing Affordability Working Group:** Evaluates affordable and accessible housing efforts, including zoning definitions and the feasibility of a zoning overlay and other development and homeownership

incentives. The working group began meeting in July and will deliver recommendations by the summer/fall of 2025. Click [here](#) for more.

- **Adequate Pubic Facilities Review Task Force:** The Code requires a review of AP-FO within one year of adoption of the General Plan. DPZ is planning to convene the group by October. Public hearings will be held in the fall 2024 and spring 2025. Final recommendations are anticipated to be presented to the Council by summer 2025. The group's membership has not been announced. Click [here](#) for more.



Stocking students with the required school supplies can be prohibitively expensive for some families. Prepare for Success helps by soliciting donations from the community. You can drop off school supplies at Columbia Association recreational facilities, library branches, Gary Arthur and Roger Carter Community Centers, Columbia Village offices; click [here](#) for more.

County & Community Updates

Tax Credits



Aging in Place Tax Credit

Application deadline extended to July 31

Who is eligible?

- Property owners at least 65 years old who have lived in the same house for at least 30 years as of June 30.
- Retired members of the military who are at least 65 years old and have 20 years of active service with the Uniformed Services of the United States, the Military Reserves, or the National Guard.
- Surviving spouses of qualifying service members.

Can homeowners own more than one home?

Yes. I sponsored CB37-2023, which removed the prohibition on owners of multiple residential properties from receiving the property tax credit. Only the applicant's primary residence is eligible for the credit.

What is the amount of the credit?

The property tax credit is equal to 20% of the tax on the assessed value up to \$650,000.

What is the duration of the credit?

The credit is granted for eight (8) years as long as the property owner remains qualified. A property owner who received the credit prior

to July 1, 2022 will receive an additional three years. For example: Applicants who received the first AIP credit in 2017 will receive the last credit in 2024.

What is the application process?

An initial application should be submitted to the Department of Finance. After the initial application is approved, the credit will be automatically renewed unless the property owner is no longer eligible. Certification letters to ensure continuing eligibility are mailed in the spring.

Commission on Veterans & Military Families

Deadline August 2

Veterans or active-duty service members, family members of a veteran or active-duty service member, or individuals who work or volunteers for a service-member or veteran organization are invited to apply to this County Commission. Click [here](#) for more.

Howard County Delegation Chairs

The State Delegation has announced that Delegate Chao Wu will serve as the House Chair of the Delegation and Senator Clarence Lame will continue as Senate Chair. Congratulations to these representatives and thank you to the outgoing Delegate Chair.

Aging in Place Tax Credit: click [here](#)

Keeping up with Deb



North Laurel Pool Groundbreaking



Dragon Boat Festival



Hoco Pride



Juneteenth at the Lake

Keeping up with Deb



North Tunnel Groundbreaking



Takumi Sushi Grand Opening at The Mall

Upcoming Events

Teen Kick Backs

1-4pm

Click [here](#) for locations.

Teens 11 to 17 years old are invited to the County's community centers to enjoy free drop-in programs. Activities include pizza and snacks, sports, and video games.

Columbia Association's Teen & Middle School Advisory Committee

2nd & 4th Wednesdays at 3:15pm,

The Barn, 5853 Robert Oliver Place

This committee of young people meets to discuss how CA can meet the needs of Columbia's teens. The committee is looking for new members. Click [here](#) for more.

Howard County Fair

August 3-10

Click [here](#) for more

