



## A Message from the County Executive

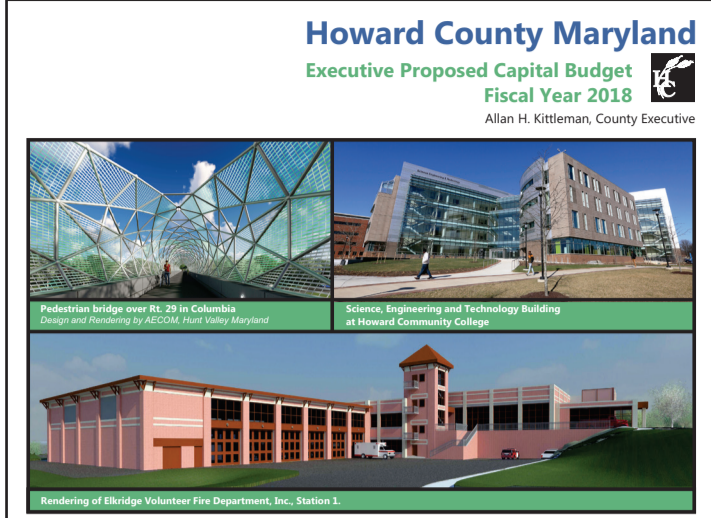
### Dear Friends,

I submitted my proposed Fiscal Year 2018 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for Howard County to the County Council late on Friday, building on my administration's past approach to focusing on the county's core needs, holding the line on debt service, investing in needed infrastructure improvements and making government more responsive.

This budget also helps push the "fast-forward" button on delayed projects and introduces critical new projects. It totals \$374.3 million, including \$201.3 million from General Obligation (GO) bonds and \$105 million estimated public financing to replace the aging Circuit Courthouse.

The funds address a wide-range of needs for the county, from school renovations and site acquisitions to flood remediation for Ellicott City and public safety and health needs, such as funds to replace our public safety radio system and planning money for a detox and outpatient treatment center.

I would like to acknowledge the Spending Affordability Advisory Committee, County Council, county department heads, residents and community leaders for their help and guidance in producing this budget. As with every year, we had to make some hard choices. But thanks to everyone's input, I believe we have struck a good balance that not only meets our immediate needs but also stays within our financial means.



### Focus on education



Education continues to be our top priority as can be seen by our commitment to provide the funds to renovate aging school buildings, build new schools to meet enrollment growth, improve technology and support systemic renovations.

The FY 2018 proposed school CIP totals \$59.1 million, including projected state funding of \$14.9 million. With this budget, we will complete the Wilde Lake Middle School replacement and the Patuxent Valley Middle School renovation projects, as well as support renovations and additions at Swansfield and Waverly elementary schools. We

have included funding to build a 42nd elementary school because of a burgeoning student population in the northeastern and southeastern parts of the county, as well as funding to buy land, plan and design a 13th high school.

The capital budget also includes \$11.4 million for the design and renovation of the Nursing and SET buildings and other improvements at Howard Community College.

### Improving Human Services and Supporting Economic Development

From the day I took office, I pledged to make county government more efficient and make our human services comprehensive and effective. This capital budget supports that goal by creating the Howard County Innovation Center and the Community Resources Campus.

Supporting our long-term vision of turning the Gateway complex into an Innovation District, the Howard County Innovation Center (HCIC) will consolidate the Economic Development Authority, the Maryland Center for Entrepreneurship and the Howard County Tech Council into one building. This will provide more room for innovations labs, a new technology accelerator and additional incubator companies. This next step will be the catalyst to move the Innovation District forward by bringing in private investment to support our growing industries.

I am also building upon the concept of our Nonprofit Center. I want to create the Howard County Community Resources Campus (CRC) by relocating the county's departments of Housing and Community Development and Community Resources and Services, the Office of Human Rights Commission and the nonprofit Community Action Council in the same complex as the Nonprofit Center. By doing this, we will to truly embody the "No Wrong Door" approach in the delivery of human services.

### New park facilities and indoor pool

We are fortunate in Howard County to have some of the best recreational facilities in the state. This budget will provide \$1.7 million for the completion of a "Playground for All," a universally designed playground for children of all abilities, space for games, and a restroom and pavilion at Blandair Park. The budget includes \$500,000 for the design of an indoor pool at the North Laurel Community Center. The community has asked for this pool for many years, and I am pleased to be able to include funding to bring this project closer to reality.

### Strengthening our community

Acquisition and remediation funding to preserve the Harriet Tubman Building as a local landmark are included in this capital budget. For nearly two decades, the community has fought to turn the Harriet Tubman School into an African-American culture and education center. As many of you know, the county school system has been using the building for critical maintenance operations which must be moved to a more commercial, permanent facility in order to facilitate this request.

For our seniors, we have continued to strengthen services and facilities. The new, expanded Elkrige 50+ Center will provide additional programming opportunities and expanded services when it opens in March 2018. Also included in the budget is \$200,000 to begin planning for an addition at the East Columbia 50+ Center.

### Ellicott City recovery and rebuilding

The July 30, 2016 flood caused extensive damage to Historic Ellicott City but our disciplined approach to the current year's budget allowed us to absorb the costs of recovery and emergency rebuilding without dipping into the Rainy Day fund or cutting services.

This capital budget builds on the work we started two years ago. It includes \$1.8 million to continue the efforts not only along Ellicott City's Main Street, but to address long-standing issues in the Valley Mede community as well. This is in addition to the \$7.85 million we have allocated in the last two years on remediation efforts in Ellicott City.

This new project also provides \$200,000 to plan, design and implement parking improvements identified in the Ellicott City Master Plan, which is expected to be completed during this fiscal year.



### Public Safety and Health

In 2016, there were 29 opioid-related deaths in Howard County. Every month, our EMS crews respond to an average of 27 opioid-related cases. And the numbers continue to grow. I am introducing a new capital project to create a rehabilitation treatment center to address critical health challenges related to opioid overdoses with \$250,000 to support the site selection and design process to move forward quickly on this project.

Our capital budget also continues to address the needs of police, fire and emergency operations. The budget includes \$6.2 million in a multi-year approach to replace and enhance the public safety radio system. The vendor of the county's current system will stop manufacturing or supporting this radio system in mid-2018, necessitating its replacement.

The county is also in the process of finalizing the acquisition of state property to construct the Waterloo Fire Station. I fully funded this project in last year's budget and expect it to get underway this fiscal year.

In addition, in FY 2018 the county will start the design of a new 10,000-square-foot fire station in West Columbia and plan for a new Central District Police Station to improve response times and support community policing.

### Transportation and Infrastructure



We will complete improvements to the Route 29 pedestrian bridge, connecting Oakland Mills and Town Center by next spring. The improvements will include the addition of a spiraling, geodesic tube around the structure, upgraded lighting and additional safety enhancements.

Our PAYGO capital funds include \$4.5 million to continue our efforts to address a \$56 million, 10-year backlog on road resurfacing as of FY 2016. In FY 2017, I allocated \$10 million for road resurfacing to catch up on these projects, leading to a combined total of \$17 million over three budget cycles.

This year we will continue to take important steps to make Howard County a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly community by funding infrastructure improvements and updating the county's design manual to reflect a Complete Streets approach to transportation. These positive strides were recognized last year with the passage of a Bicycle Master Plan and the designation of Columbia as a Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. The Complete Streets Policy will provide more transportation options to the community. In addition, I am including \$1.25 million for biking, walking and ADA improvement projects.

### Replacing an aging courthouse

The current Circuit Courthouse is 174 years old and no longer meets our needs. It lacks the necessary space and security features to meet the needs of our residents and businesses. So I have included \$105 million in public financing in the budget to move forward with a public-private partnership. The county will own the new facility when completed and a private consortium, selected through competitive bidding in FY 2018, will design, construct, operate and maintain this new building under a 30-year contract.



### Dates to Remember

**April 6, 7 p.m.** County Council public hearing on CIP budget, George Howard Building

**Friday, April 21,** Operating Budget due to Council

**Monday, April 24,** 7 p.m. Capital and Operating Budget public hearing, George Howard Building

**Tuesday, May 2,** 7 p.m. Operating Budget public hearing, George Howard Building

**Friday, May 12,** 1 p.m. Capital and Operating Budget public hearing, George Howard Building