



KITTLEMAN TRANSITION TEAM 2015

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March 18, 2015

Honorable Allan H. Kittleman
County Executive for Howard County, Maryland
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Re: Kittleman Transition Team Report

Dear County Executive Kittleman:

After your election to serve Howard County as its next County Executive, you formed your Transition Team to help you gather and organize current information about the various departments within Howard County. From this information, you then asked the Transition Team to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses within each Department, looking for areas where improvements could be made, while recognizing the strengths of each Department. You also asked that the Transition Team look at pressures coming from outside each organization, identifying opportunities or threats that may be present.

To accomplish this goal, you appointed 133 citizens from across the community to help, along with me as Chair and Dennis Schrader as a senior advisor. These 133 members were then divided into 11 Committees. The Committees, each one chaired by someone of your choosing, represented all of the areas of government where you sought help in understanding the issues and opportunities as you entered office.

Once the Committees were organized, each met with supervisors and employees within each Department, as well as well as “customers” of the Department, so that a full review could be accomplished. At one point, you and your staff met with each Committee Chair and the Department Head for the relevant department to continue the discussions that the Transition Team initiated.

Finally, the summary of the Transition Team Recommendations that accompanies this letter was prepared by me. As you will see, there are two parts. First, there are eight general observations I have made as Chair of the Transition Team. Second, there are the recommendations of the Transition Team itself, broken down by department.

From comments I have received from members of the Transition Team, this whole process was a very positive experience, even though many spent untold hours working to get this report completed. The employees in Howard County Government are very professional, but also friendly, and this report could not have been completed without their complete cooperation and open discussions.

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I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairs of the Committees for really coming through with their efforts. Each Chair took responsibility for their respective Committees and managed them through the holiday season with what most would consider unrealistic deadlines, to complete their jobs. These same comments can be directed to the members of Transition Team who gave their all to help you to get off to a good start as our County Executive. So, I say a heartfelt "thank you" to each and every member of the Transition Team. This report could not have been prepared without your invaluable work, time and insights.

We, the members of your Transition Team, also want to thank you for the opportunity to serve you and our County, and we look forward to serving you further in the future.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Davis
Chair

cc: Members, Kittleman Transition Team

Section B. Overall Observations.

Throughout the transition process, several issues were identified that did not fit squarely within any one department's bailiwick. Below are eight of those issues. With many of these issues, significant community support will be required to create a solution; for others, it will just require a focus by the leaders in Howard County Government to implement a solution. Regardless, by identifying them in this report, it is hoped that conversations will begin that will result in answers that can be presented for solution.

1. Open and Transparent Government. In order to provide open and transparent government to the citizens of Howard County, two elements are critical: content and communication. Both of these elements need significant work. With regard to content, the Office of Budget will be tasked with developing HoCoStat, a government-wide set of metrics that can be used to measure success or help define areas where work is needed. Having the SAP ERP system fully functioning will help provide some of the information that will be needed by the Office of Budget to populate its reporting requirements. It would appear, therefore, that the content element is well on its way to being provided.

The element of communication will require immediate attention, especially since the main means of communication will necessarily be through its website. One common concern that no one interviewed argued against was that the government website is, to say the least, problematic. Even highly-experienced employees could not always determine where needed information could be located on the current website. Citizen input to the Transition Team echoed this concern. As we move forward with HoCoStat, as initiatives are developed to provide access to DPZ documents, and as other proposed interactions are developed to provide an open and transparent government, developing and maintaining a complementary website that can disburse information in an effective manner will be critical.

2. Budget Issues – Need for Fiscal Analysis. As the Spending Affordability Committee found in its recent report, tax revenue will not be increasing in proportion to budget requirements in the near future. Many recommendations were noted in that report and need not be discussed further in this Transition Report. However, there was one area of concern that has not yet been discussed, and that is the budget impact of the recent acquisitions of commercial properties by the County (such as the Flier Building, the Grempler Building, Long Reach Village Center, Belmont Manor, and the Ascend One Building). These purchases were made using money allocated under the Land Acquisition Contingency Fund where “no funded capital project exists.” The problem that was identified is that the purchase of a property is only a small part of the cost of acquisition. With the Flier Building, for example, the purchase price was almost \$2.8 million. Then, for the FY2017 Capital Budget, rehabilitation costs of \$764,000 for planning and \$6,626,000 for construction were included, bringing the total estimated cost to \$10,165,000, and these are the costs just to have the building ready for occupancy. In addition, by purchasing the building, the County is losing \$27,378 in annual property tax revenues. Even paying ongoing maintenance costs is stretching County resources. By requiring a fiscal analysis of a purchase of this nature, the County would have been in

a better position to evaluate whether the County should be committed to this kind of expenditure without public discussion or approval by the County Council.

3. Fully Implement SAP ERP. SAP ERP is enterprise resource planning software developed by the German company SAP SE. This software was purchased by Howard County Government two or three years ago to help with the financial planning and other “business functions” of government. According to the SAP Steering Committee in Howard County Government, “SAP ERP is the nucleus of an enterprise-wide system of shared information and process management, communication and reporting, and analysis and decision-making tools to be used by Howard County Government and its affiliated partners to enable Howard County Government to budget, procure, account for, audit, and utilize its resources for the benefit of the County government and its partners.”

Truly, by definition, fully understanding and implementing the SAP ERP system is an overarching issue because every department in Howard County Government has some interaction with this software, and workforce training has been and will continue to constitute a large investment in both time and training in order to fulfill its potential. We heard from many in various departments and offices, however, that there is some frustration in using the SAP ERP system. In some cases, interfacing with SAP was problematic, and in other cases, the lack of knowledge about how SAP works was a problem. These problems must all be addressed because the potential financial and management benefits that may be derived from having a fully-functioning software system of this nature cannot be overstated

4. Workforce Issues – Retirement, Intern Program and Contract Employees. Many Transition Team Committees identified the aging of the workforce in County government as a concern. Mostly, there were concerns raised that retirements could adversely affect governmental operations because of the loss of institutional knowledge, and that succession plans should be adopted to minimize the disruption caused by those employees who choose to retire. At the same time, instituting a robust intern program with Howard Community College, among other educational institutions, could create a “win-win” situation; County government would benefit by gaining the perspective and the energy of younger workers, and HCC would expand its ability to provide interns with quality opportunities to learn more about their chosen professions. As a side benefit, the County may also be able to identify highly qualified applicants for jobs as they become available.

Also, the policy of hiring persons to provide services to the County on a long-term, contract basis should be reviewed. While using such arrangements on a short-term basis may be necessary to address certain situations, using contract employees over a long-term basis has questionable legal and policy concerns.

5. Hold a Symposium on Population Health. A very strong recommendation from the Health Committee of the Transition Team was that there should be a collaborative effort to hold a symposium on population health this fall. The purpose for this symposium would be to define population health and identify programs that various stakeholders are sponsoring in the community. By building robust population health awareness, our community will be much stronger, from the perspectives of health and quality of life.

Another suggestion for such a symposium is based on the changes in the public funding for hospitals that is required under the Medicare Waiver Program. A symposium on the use of Advance Medical Directives should have the goal of achieving a high participation rate among adults in Howard County that approaches the participation rate of 90% that was achieved in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. In Howard County, the current participation rate is closer to 25%. This is just one example. By making this Symposium an annual event, other health care issues could be addressed in the future, such as combatting obesity, understanding mental health issues, and addressing children's health issues.

There are a number of "partners" who could work together to co-sponsor a symposium on population health that would elevate and enhance both the community's knowledge of the population health and positively impact the ways and means by which the County can improve health in the community. Along with the Howard County Health Department or other appropriate agencies, these partners would include the Horizon Foundation, Howard County General Hospital, and other third party medical care provider groups.

6. Transportation – Regional Transportation System. While PlanHoward 2030, the Transit Development Plan and other County transportation planning tools have been developed in recent years, one of the overriding concerns affecting the economic development and quality of life for Howard County citizens is the integration of a regional public transportation system into the planning process. Our major roadways are clogged during rush hours already; and, the influx of the planned development of Downtown Columbia, along with other population and work centers in Howard County over the next 10 years, will make a bad situation even worse. Combined with anticipated population growth in Maryland by 2030 at about 10% (about 600,000 people)¹, commuting by automobile will be an all day affair. As our commuting time increases (and Maryland is already ranked dead last in the nation for commuting time according to the U.S. Census), the County's attractiveness to businesses wishing to relocate or grow in Maryland will decrease.² Incremental changes will not be sufficient. It will take a major capital investment, involving the State and the Federal government, as well as private businesses, to create a regional public transportation system in a timely manner.

7. Creating a Department of Health and Human Resources. In the Department of Citizens Services portion of the Transition Team Report, there is a recommendation that the creation of a Department of Aging be considered; however, there was also a strong minority opinion in that Committee that a Department of Health and Human Services be considered. Discussions with representatives from the Department of Health and the Mental Health Authority added further impetus to the idea that public policies and programs intersect with the citizenry along the continuum of each person's life, not just at one age or another. Therefore, there could be a number of positive synergies created by bringing together the functions of the Health Department, the Mental Health Authority, the Office of Children's Services, the Office of Aging, Disability Services,

¹ Maryland Department of Planning, July 2014.

² See Recommendation No. 13 of the Report of the Maryland Economic Development Climate Commission, 2014 Interim Report (often referred to as the Augustine Report) at Page 26.

Housing and any other current government functions under one department. This suggestion will require considerable thought and understanding; fortunately, however, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Montgomery County has developed such a department so that evaluating how this approach has worked in another community will not be difficult. The effectiveness of such an integration of function could be attractive to emulate in Howard County.

8. Healthy Howard Is A Success. During the past debates about Healthy Howard, it was often argued that when the Affordable Care Act came into full effect, the need for Healthy Howard would be diminished because other avenues would be available to insure access to affordable health care. At this point, those other efforts are, in fact, succeeding. Therefore, it should be considered whether the \$100,000 currently allocated to Healthy Howard should be repurposed to support population health.

Section C. List of Transition Team Members.

DPZ & DILP

Cole Schnorf, Chair
Bruce Harvey
Carl Gutschick
Dan Pallace
Greg Fitchitt
Jim Greenfield
Joan Lancos
Phil Engelke
Stu Kohn
Susan Garber
Wayne Newsome

DPW

Chip Lundy, Co-Chair
Sharonlee Vogel, Co-Chair
Jack Boender
John Startt
Duane Carey
Brad Myers
Jay Parekh
Jeanette Mills
Eric Regelin
Ed Wilson
Andy Weinrub
Sam Lancelotta
Jeremy Rutter
Bob Corbett

County Administration

Chip Doetsch, Chair
Andy Barth
Kyle Becraft
Ned Tillman
Steve Sachs
Jahantab Siddiqui
Alice Giles
Sandy Schrader
Lisa Hall
Ivan Betancourt
Dick Lombardo
Henry Kim

Technology & Communications

Ananta Hejeebu, Chair
Howard Johnson
Dick Gelfman
Jimmy Wiggs
Ron Gula
Paul Martin
Robin Abello
Sean Keller
Rodney Peterson
Luis Valdivieso
Steven Lewicky

HCEDA

Rachael Mull, Chair
Cathy Ward
Lynn Moore
Kyle Lorton
Brian Walter
Robin Shavitz
Jeff Agnor
Susan Nelson
Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman
Jonathan Ahn

Citizen Services

Angel Cartengna, Chair
Mike Couch
Joe Murray
Malynda Madzel
Mitchell Lee
Todd Olsen
Ken Lundeen
Phyliss Madachy
Kim Hartman
Karen Dixon
John Eberhart

Education, Library, HCC

Janet Cornick, Chair
Dianne Mikilus
Luke Chow
Charlie Ashcraft
Laree Siddiqui
Louise Reimer
Rick Wilson
Charley Sung
Mike Smith
Frank Smith
Ron Bartyczak
Helena Seidel
Shelley Wygant
Carol Loveless
Tonya Tiffany
Helen Harlin

Recreation & Parks

Jean Parker, Chair
Tony Salazar
Mike Lettieri
Brenda VonRautenkranz
Milton Matthews
Joel Goodman
Bill Santos
Tim Feaga
Joan Lancos
Cathy Hudson
Jack Milani

Housing

Andrea Ingram, Chair
Bill McCormack
Paul Revelle
Leonard Vaughan
Roy Appletree
Nancy McCord
Peter Morgan
Mike Riemer
Carol Beatty
Earl Armingier
Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan
Dong Whang

Health, Mental Health, Social Services

Ron Carlson, Chair
Feli Sola-Carter
Jennifer VanBlarcom
Kristen Detwiler
Kathy Swanson
Nikki Highsmith-Vernick
Lisa Feinberg
Dottie Moore
Margaret Kim
Debbie Slack Katz
Deb Rivkin
Steve Snelgrove
Lou Grimmel
Beverly Francis-Gibson
Victoria Sessler
Paul Gleichauf
Frank Vitale
Marty Wasserman
Stephen Schimpff
Eric Aldrich
Ayesha Balwa Holmes
Charlene Gallion

Public Safety

David Steele, Chair
John Newnan
Terry Thompson
Steven Drielak
Kevin Schmidt
Reg Avery
Tudy Adler
Greg Lawrence
Herman Charity

It is with great pleasure that the members of the Transition Team present their recommendations to be considered to address a wide range of issues that were identified across Howard County Government.

Section D. Summary of Transition Team Recommendations.

1. Community Services.

(a) **The Department of Citizen Services.** The Department of Citizen Services (“DCS”) consists of four divisions – the Office of Aging, the Office of Children’s Services, the Office of Consumer Affairs, and the Administrative Office that, among its various functions, coordinates care for the county’s homeless population and manages the county’s grants to non-profit organizations through Community Partnerships. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Enhance the Office of Consumer Affairs and expand it to the Office of Consumer Protection. Review staffing needs after seeking ways to develop stronger relationships with the County’s Office of Law and investigators. In order to better protect the residents in the County against creative and diverse fraudulent techniques being used, the Office needs to have the ability and the authority to conduct appropriate investigations in a timely manner. Consider moving this function to the Office of Law.
- Establish a task force to evaluate the merits of elevating the Office of Aging to the Department of Aging to appropriately address the growing and increasingly diverse senior population. The new Department of Aging must be able to address the issues that most affect our senior citizens – health, the ability to remain in their homes, access to affordable housing, transportation, protection from parasitic and criminal economic practices, caregiver support from family or other sources, and the aging population’s need for physical and social accessibility to their surrounding community.
- The Department/Office of Aging needs to adopt policies and procedures consistent with the proposed 20-year Master Plan for the Older Adult Population to deal with a growing, increasingly diverse aging population requiring special services to remain healthy and independent.
- Consider an alternative approach to creating a new Department of Aging, though on a much larger scale, by evaluating the merits of creating a Department of Health and Human Services that would be charged with identifying and meeting the needs of our population throughout the continuum of life.
- The Office of Children’s Services has a positive impact on the lives of children and families in Howard County, but is currently hampered by structural and financial limitations that reduce its ability to reach more children and families who need the

programs and services it offers. New space should be found where staff can be centralized and where access to updated technology and telecommunications services can be provided. Consider moving this Office to the Office of Mental Health.

- The Community Service Partnership Grant Program needs to increase its transparency of the grant decision-making process, and balance accountability for how the non-profits spend their respective grants with the possibility of burdening them with excessive requirements. Further, consideration should also be given to moving this function to County Administration.
- The efforts to reduce homelessness have been relatively recent with the adoption of the Plan to End Homelessness in 2010. The coordination of services by the various partners has just begun to demonstrate positive outcomes for the community. Any changes which might be contemplated should consider the potential for disruption to progress made.

(b) **Department of Health.** The Health Department is the sole government agency responsible for improving the health of Howard County residents. By State and County authority, the Department is charged with enforcement of certain federal, State and County laws and regulations. In addition to regulatory and enforcement work, the Health Department directly provides public health services. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Assess the Impact of the Affordable Care Act on Public Health. Review the Affordable Care Act for the purpose of assessing its impact on the Department's current roles and responsibilities. Since much of the legislation was geared to ameliorating pre-enactment gaps, shortfalls and disparities in the areas of quality and accessibility, it will be important to know whether and to what extent these changes have and/or will affect the demand for current services. Might there be resultant reductions or areas where services are no longer necessary? These changes may in turn allow the Department to free up and/or change how its scarce resources might be reinvested in other areas, such as enhancing its capacity building programs and strengthening infrastructure activities.
- Strengthen data collection/analysis capability in the workforce. Facilitate, in collaboration with non-profit organizations and agencies, the enabling of a workforce qualified and capable of carrying out the ever increasing challenges of data collection and analysis. These tasks are increasingly critical for the effective planning, review and assessment in conducting the 2015 needs assessment survey.
- Aggressively address the County's obesity issue. Develop a comprehensive plan to prevent, diagnose, and treat the risk factors contributing to obesity, a major driver for chronic illness in Howard County. Work with the business community and other community partners to develop both education and public policy strategies that will affect positive and measurable change.

- Convene symposium on population health. Plan and put in place an annual symposium or conference on population health. The event, to be co-sponsored with other organizations throughout the County, would have the mission to elevate and enhance both the community's knowledge of the population health and positively impact the ways and means by which the County can improve the health of the community.

(c) **Mental Health Authority.** The Howard County Mental Health Authority (MHA) is responsible for planning, developing, managing, and monitoring the publicly funded mental health system in Howard County. The most used services funded by the public mental health system include outpatient treatment, residential services, case management, day programs, mobile treatment teams and vocational supported employment. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Assign the MHA the lead leadership role on implementing Behavioral Health Task Force Recommendations. The Behavioral Health Task Force is expected to present a comprehensive set of recommendations to the County Executive in March of this year. The report will present strategies that address needs covering prevention, early and on-going intervention. MHA should be named as the County organization that will take the leadership role in carrying out report's recommendations.
- Integrate available mental health services. Explore viable ways and means by which the MHA can better connect and/or integrate its roles and responsibilities with other available county support services. This enhancement would initially involve both the Office of Children's Services and the Substance Abuse Program administered by the County Health Department.
- Create a blueprint for children's mental health. Review current programs, resources and partnerships that support families who care for children/adolescents with mental health needs. Develop a blueprint and action plan that is family-driven and comprehensive. The plan should include attention to early identification, access to treatment, family support and education in addition to crisis support and crisis beds. This initiative's success rests on both creating and sustaining partnerships with all child serving agencies including Juvenile Services, Department of Social Services, Disability Services and the Howard County Public School System.

(d) **Department of Recreation and Parks.** As one of Howard County's most diverse – and perhaps most familiar – departments, R&P fulfills its mission effectively, responsibly, efficiently, and innovatively. Enlisting its Board of Directors, 210 full-time employees, and a valuable pool of devoted volunteers, the department completes its responsibilities well while taking appropriate and often trend-setting actions to analyze and plan future paths. The committee was impressed with R&P's leadership and creativity in juggling so many diverse areas. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Conduct formal analysis of R&P's fee structure to determine whether they are competitive in the markets where R&P competes.
- Identify ways to strengthen R&P's overall economic impact to the County. For example, large-scale tournaments can be held yielding economic benefits, including up to 30,000 extra room nights per year.
- Explore additional opportunities to partner with private and other governmental entities on projects, such as the Howard County Public School System, to enhance or expand current programs such as environmental education programs.
- Establish a more unified approach regarding initiatives that involve other County departments, Howard County Public School System, Columbia Association and others.
- Address the declining annual balance for the Self-Sustaining Fund as it may not be enough to fulfill unforeseen expenditures and supporting less popular programs.

(e) **Department of Social Services.** The Department of Social Services is under County and State jurisdiction. Its functions include: child support services, including absent parent location, day care services and foster care placement, child protective service programs, income maintenance programs which provide financial assistance for needy and unemployed residents, food stamps for needy families and individuals, and Medicaid benefits for low-income people and parent aid programs. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Conduct a Social Services Department comprehensive workforce analysis. Undertake a departmental staffing analysis to determine (i) whether and to what extent staffing is adequately addressing client needs, e.g., reducing wait lists for services; reducing delays in processing requests for services; (ii) assess the potential impact of the projected hiring freeze; (iii) ensuring access for non-English speaking residents; and (iv) provide an action plan that addresses identified shortfalls.
- Provide an assessment and action plan of the Agency's technology capabilities. In order to assure the agency has the required technology in place or planned to meet the increased workload demands, the organization needs to assess the extent of any current and projected and related gaps. This review would especially identify issues related to the integration of state and County systems, provide an action plan for addressing any shortfalls as well as an assessment of needed upgrades in hardware and software.
- Identify potential new revenue producing resources. Investigate the potential of developing full or partial reimbursement agreements with non-profits and other public agencies directly benefiting from the receipt of services provided by the Department. For example, such an arrangement might be developed with the Howard County General Hospital and Howard County Library that now benefit by having the services of a fulltime

member of the agency provide on-going screening of patients for Medicaid eligibility. This initiative by the agency would explore other revenue producing options.

- Review services and programs for children with special needs. Develop a special taskforce (possibly in coordination with the Behavioral Task Force) to review educational and other needed services geared to serving children with special needs. The goal of the undertaking would be to identify ways to reduce the number of voluntary placements that continue to occur in the County.

2. Education. The Howard County Public School System, the Howard Community College and the Howard County Library System contribute significantly to the quality of life of the citizens in the county. Each agency has a strong leadership team and a strategic plan in place. A strategic investment in education gives every citizen an opportunity to thrive and enhance the long-term prosperity of the entire community.

The Howard County Community takes great pride in their education environment with good reason. Outstanding students, top-notch staff, and innovative programs provide a system that attracts residents and businesses from around the nation. There are 83 schools, over 50,000 students and over 8,000 employees with a budget of over \$725.3 million.

Instructional initiatives engage every student in learning, and this begins in the early grades to give each child the best chance for success. The system empowers teachers with exciting new options for linking the classroom to the larger world with maximum resources to support teaching and learning.

The goal of the Howard County Library System, a component of the county's education system, is to deliver high-quality public education for all ages. Partnering with the school system and the community college has supported the library in its vision to advance the economy and enhance quality of life for the citizens in the county. More than a quarter of a million people participated in the Instructive and Enlightening Experiences orchestrated by the Howard County Library System.

The library is recognized as a leader among the best public libraries. For the fourth consecutive year it has been designated as a national "Star" Library System by the Library Journal for "delivering excellence in public education for all". The Library Journal selected the library as Library of the Year (2013) and described it as "a new model for libraries everywhere".

The Howard Community College is an exciting place to learn, work and grow. The college has been awarded the distinction as a great college and is one of the fastest growing community colleges in Maryland and enrolls almost 30,000 students annually. In fact, one out of every four graduates of Howard County Public School System attends the college each year. The college is a vital part of the Howard County Community.

Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Increase funding to meet competitive salaries, and benefits and continuing education programs.

- Increase funding in order to continue with capital projects.
- Continue and expand current programs to accommodate the increased number of students.
- Continue to keep pace with technology needs.
- Have frequent meetings with the county executive, superintendent and school board members to insure open and ongoing communication in order to inform the county executive of challenges within the school system.
- Seek additional funds for Howard Community College to be used to offset the loss of tuition revenue resulting from the statewide enrollment decline.

3. **General Government.**

(a) **Department of County Administration.** The Department of County Administration assists the County Executive by supervising the day-to day operations of county government. The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for preparation of the annual budget, human resources, fleet operations, inter-department coordination between the executive and legislative branches, special projects, policy and procedure development, labor relations, human rights, workforce development, risk management, purchasing and transportation services. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Involve the Public Information Office in increasing communication between and among (i) departments, for both day-to-day and crisis situations, and (ii) the County and the School System, EDA, HCC and the Columbia Association.
- Have the Public Information Office work with the DTCS to develop a more usable, customer friendly website that can be used for two-way communications between the County and the citizens. Include social media in the development of the website. This website could then be used to increase transparency and use programs such as HoCoStat.
- The mission of the current Office of Environmental Sustainability should be evaluated and enhanced. [Since this recommendation is already in the process of being implemented, further background on the recommendation is not needed.]
- The current structure of the Office of Human Rights and the Human Rights Commission should be evaluated in addressing the need for more community outreach, and how human rights cases are currently handled. The Commission, as an advocacy body, would be in a position to proactively encourage discussions in the community about diversity and inclusion, while the Office, through a hearing examiner, would be able to hear cases and appeals on a timely basis.

- The present way in which County funds are spent on contracts within the Office of Purchasing should be re-evaluated. Currently, there is a 10% set aside requirement for the Equal Business Opportunity Program (for women, minority and disabled-owned businesses). It is recommended that this percentage be increased to 25% over three years, and that veteran-owned businesses be added. It is further recommended that the percentage of contracts that go to County businesses be increased. Currently, only 119 of 649 contracts go to Howard County based businesses.
- Fleet management is a well run office; however, interviews did yield a need to upgrade the data reporting system to match the financial system, to consider reviewing the take home policy for County-owned cars; and develop measures to determine if the electric/hybrid vehicles result in overall savings.
- The Office of Workforce Development needs to identify and successfully apply for more grants that can be used to help people acquire the skills needed for employment.
- The Office of Transportation needs a more permanent and functional home in County government. A determination should be made as to whether it should become a cabinet-level department or remain as an office within DPZ or elsewhere. Regardless, this Office needs to become integrally involved in land use planning processes in the County, both from an educational perspective (internal and external) and in a regulatory review role.
- The RTA (Regional Transportation Agency) is the Office of Transportation's biggest success, and the budget for the program should remain steady. Currently, the structure is not designed for sustainability with Howard County picking up 70% of the cost although it does not control the RTA. The possibility of the RTA becoming a true authority through legislation by the Maryland General Assembly should be evaluated with the help of the Office of Transportation.
- The Office of Budget should lead the effort to implement HoCoStat, a department-wide effort to measure the effectiveness of government. Thus this Office will need each department to identify quantitative metrics that are currently tracked or should be tracked that can be used in HoCoStat.
- Better communication, and, perhaps, funding is needed between the Office of Transportation and DPW so that needed transportation projects, such as the construction of the new transit facility in Savage, striping for bicycle and pedestrian pathways, and paving can be accomplished.
- The Office of Human Resources needs better space accommodations so that there is space to maintain the confidentiality of personnel records and conversations. Consideration should also be given to outsourcing the FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) administration.

- Get a concrete quantification of the Dedicated Insurance Fund balance “deficit” caused by underfunding in the recent budget year and develop acceptable financial strategies to rectify it.
- The integration of a robust integrated County technology platform (intranet) would enhance the Risk Management Office’s data management and its ability to offer more robust training and validation tools. This should not drive the technology integration process, but would add value and further help to reduce and manage the exposure to loss by the County and its employees.
- Further investigate the County’s Emergency Management System to assure that communication with all employees is optimal.
- Establish an Office of Strategic Community Partnerships within the Department of County Administration in order to coordinate efforts with the local business, non-profit, and faith-based organizations, in conjunction with state and federal agencies. This office would coordinate efforts between many sectors to maximize the County’s diverse resources to help care for the residents of Howard County.
- The current County Solicitor has resigned, with an effective date no later than June 30, 2015. In identifying a successor, it should be noted that the confluence of an aging staff and dramatic changes in the practice of law caused by evolving technology will require strong leadership to ensure that appropriate changes can be timely incorporated into the Office. This situation is made even more critical because it appears that the Office will be operating in an environment with fewer, rather than greater, resources. It is critical that the right person serve as the new County Solicitor during this period.

(b) **Howard County Economic Development Authority.** The Howard County Economic Development Authority (EDA) is a quasi-public organization, which is a component unit of Howard County created during the 1993 General Assembly. The purpose of EDA is to develop and implement an economic development plan, relieve conditions of unemployment, and encourage the location of new industry, commerce and business while assisting in the retention of existing businesses in Howard County. In addition, EDA promotes the economic health, welfare, and quality of life of the residents of Howard County. The Howard County Arts Council and the Office of Tourism were also evaluated by this Committee of the Transition Team. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Develop a new strategic plan in the current fiscal year in order to give the EDA the proper focus that it needs for the upcoming years.
- Review strategically the need for EDA to evaluate the Accelerator for the Commercialization of Technology, 3D Maryland Innovation, and the Conscious Venture

Lab to determine whether each should be continued. Funding sources will need to be identified for those that are continued.

- Continue to protect the farming community so that needed services can be made available to that community, and so that farmers can continue to use their farmland to make a livable income.
- Continue to position Howard County as the place to be for businesses working in cyber security, due to our proximity to the federal government and NSA Headquarters.
- Identify a site for the co-location of EDA and the Maryland Center for Entrepreneurship.
- If it determined that Long Reach Village Center is not the best location to create an arts center, strong consideration should be given to creating that arts center elsewhere, such as in Downtown Columbia. Further, consider whether the Howard County Arts Council and the Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission can or should be merged.
- Evaluate ways to create synergies between the Howard Office of Tourism and Promotion and with the EDA, in order to “sell” Howard County in one voice; review funding formulas related to the 2% hotel tax. Consider merging Office of Tourism into the EDA.

(c) **Department of Finance.** The Department of Finance is responsible for the collection of property and recordation taxes, custody of revenues and other receipts and the control of expenditures based on County Council approved budgets. It also maintains financial systems structured on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), prepares financial reports for use by management and outside parties and administers planning for all bond sales. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- The Department should fully embrace SAP and implement it across all office functions to maximize efficiency and data reporting.
- The website should be overhauled to be user friendly and all internal and external forms should be placed online to allow customers better access. A simple WordPress site with secure forms would be a low (or no) cost option and would simplify and streamline processes.
- Communication with customers is Finance’s biggest challenge. A revamped website and soon to be released mobile app should begin to address that challenge. However, it is recommended that Finance meets with Administration staff and PIO to further address these communication deficiencies to develop a comprehensive communication plan.
- Employees and managers should have the ability to charge time and expense to projects, grants etc.

- Finance also doesn't have the ability to track Purchase Orders. This is troublesome because the projected fiscal constraints require close scrutiny of all expenses. From a transparency and efficiency standpoint, POs should be tracked throughout the process and the budget office should be able to provide stronger oversight.
- Training for staff within Finance should be made a priority in order to guarantee no drops in service due to a retirement or termination. The Director mentioned that he could retire and it would be hard to maintain continuity of service.
- Improve customer service at the call centers as related to senior tax credits. The centers get a large number of calls related to these credits and it takes longer than average to walk seniors through the process. The team recommends moving this service to the proposed Office of Aging, or improving the level of support/training as part of the reorganization.

(d) **Department of Housing and Community Development.** The Department of Housing and Community Development works to provide affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents of Howard County. The Department administers a range of federal, state and county funded programs providing opportunities for affordable home ownership, loans and grants for special needs housing programs, rental assistance, community facilities and programs. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Develop a comprehensive county-wide vision and plan for all housing in Howard County and appoint an existing or new entity, or an experienced credentialed housing professional, to assume overall leadership for the implementation of the plan.
- Explore the creation of a Redevelopment Authority under State law which is critical to the efforts to redevelop mixed commercial and residential properties in key locations.
- Review the MIHU requirement and how the "fee in lieu" aspect is applied. The MIHU program, both rental and ownership, also needs an overall evaluation of its effectiveness to determine if changes need to be made.
- Support aligning Howard County with the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) rather than the Baltimore MSA.
- Improve the community's awareness, understanding and support of housing programs and activities through increased outreach, an improved website, and creative use of a variety of media and methods.
- Appoint a task group to examine the current Department of Housing and Community Development, Advisory Board, and Housing Commission structure and make a recommendation on possible changes.

(e) **Department of Technology and Communication Services.** The department is responsible for the infrastructure of the county's wide area network and administers all of the hardware and software used to implement the county's computer applications. The factors of cost, growth potential, ease of use, speed, reliability and security are important considerations in the department's network and systems planning. A mix of hard-wired and wireless technologies are used to make readily accessible a variety of logistical, financial and geographic data both to the public and the county's workforce. Wide area network communications work through a combination of intranet, telephone, data services, and fiber. The department's analysts and programmers use leading systems development tools in their software production efforts. Where applicable and cost effective, standard applications available from outside vendors are procured. The department also plays a major role in support of public safety systems, including the 911 system and multiple homeland security initiatives. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Establish an Advisory Board of outside technology professionals to aid the DTCS Steering Committee comprised of the Director, the Deputy, and other senior leaders to discuss such issues as strategies to address cyber security, changes in IT infrastructure and systems, and communications.
- Consolidate and better collaborate with various IT resources within the County to prevent duplication of efforts, increase coordination, and best utilize County resources. In addition, establish a clear and direct IT policy to provide consistency and efficiency. Ultimately, all County IT functions should be centralized into DTCS.
- Develop County-wide IT standards and a consistent approach to IT policy development.
- Review, organize and consistently apply an IT chargeback process.
- Consider transferring ICBN sales and operations responsibility to a private sector partner or collaborate with other ICBN counties to collectively outsource sales and support capability.
- Explore the option of returning to an earlier practice of directly broadcasting its own content, including public access to County Council sessions, hearings, and other open meetings, enabling a more informed constituency and easier ability to inform the public.
- As franchise agreements and MOUs with Comcast and Verizon are renegotiated for new terms, the County may be able to receive higher compensation in franchise and 'PEG' fees.

4. **Public Facilities.**

(a) **Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits.** The Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits is responsible for the approval and issuance of various permits, licenses, and the enforcement of County building codes and standards. These include the building, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, sign and property maintenance code. The Department inspects and licenses rental housing, mobile home parks and taxi cabs and handles animal and massage licensing. It is responsible for staff duties associated with the Plumbing Advisory Board and the Board of Electrical Examiners. The Department is organized into four divisions: Operations, Inspections and Enforcement, Plan Review, and Licenses and Permits. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Actively address the anticipated loss of institutional knowledge with impending retirements, and consider: recruiting staff, developing an internship program and cross-training.
- Explore streamlining processes, possibly allowing the option of third party review and inspection process, especially in regards to commercial and high rise development.
- Reallocate non-department related responsibilities and focuses: enforcement of sign code to DPZ and taxi licensing and inspections to the state's Public Service Commission. In addition, consider whether animal licensing could be done less frequently, perhaps in conjunction with rabies shots.
- Address IT issues such as network speeds, online presence, and compatibility issues between Accela (DILP software) and PDox (DPZ software). Also, credit card access should be available at the front desk.

(b) **Department of Planning and Zoning.** The Department of Planning and Zoning is responsible for comprehensive planning for growth and development in Howard County. The Agricultural Land Preservation program is also administered by the department. In addition, the Department of Planning and Zoning works with the following advisory/planning bodies: Baltimore Metropolitan Council, Planning Board, Historic District Commission, and Agricultural Land Preservation Board. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Reestablish the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance Task Force and commission a study.
- Divide comprehensive zoning into 2 or potentially 3 geographic areas or address text and map amendments separately.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the County Code, design manuals, and department regulations and policies to take into consideration the changing attributes

(such as urbanization) of some areas of the County. Review and define the appropriate use of redlines, waivers and variances.

- Review, based on recent history and experience, the Downtown Columbia (16 step) review process and the Village Center redevelopment review process.
- Review and modify New Town zoning in light of changed circumstances in Columbia.
- Strengthen community outreach and communication efforts. Consider enhancing website access to relevant information, staffing pre-submission meetings, better defining and publicizing the ombudsman program, and activating the Citizens Advisory Committee. Also consider financial/community impact statements in development submissions and/or staff reports.
- Provide citizen access to planning documents through PDox.
- Consider reintegrating transportation planning into DPZ.

(c) **Department of Public Works.** DPW employs about 500 persons in a wide variety of functions. The Department as a whole appears to be run efficiently, with proven leadership at the Director and Deputy Director positions. The FY 2015 Approved budget for DPW is \$214,971,511, which is one of the largest budgets in the County. DPW is divided into four bureaus: Bureau of Engineering, Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Facilities, Bureau of Highways and Bureau of Utilities. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Streamline the project dedication process through technology so that it no longer takes weeks for each department to review/approve dedication sheets.
- Provide SAP training to reduce overtime costs. Address a flaw in the Bureau of Utilities overtime system, which allows workers to combine their work, drive, and meal times to receive pay beyond actual hours worked.
- Address electronic systems and software issues throughout DPW, especially in the Bureau of Highways.
- Identify and address IT compatibility issues with other departments.
- Hire a Training Supervisor to help coordinate training needed throughout the department.

5. **Public Safety.**

(a) **Department of Corrections.** The Department of Corrections operates the Detention Center and the Central Booking Facility. The Department is responsible for

processing, treatment and care of individuals that are lawfully incarcerated in Howard County. Complete security is provided from the time of commitment until discharge. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Adopt a newer jail management system. Using a system currently in place in the State Correctional System will allow for better information sharing and communication between Howard County and the State.
- Hire and retain experienced staff by offering increased incentives and bonus options.
- Continue to use Correctional resources to support community functions and save the County resources. Such examples include bus stop and roadway clean up, landfill assistance, food preparation for the Roving Radish, and assistance in relocating County facilities.
- Consider diversifying staff to include greater Latino representation.
- Seek ways to reduce staff turnover and make positions more attractive for new hires, including making some positions benefitted, and doing a salary and benefits review to determine regional competitiveness.

(b) **Department of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS).** DFRS is a dedicated, well trained force that regularly is the envy of fire departments within the region and State of Maryland. Nationally Certified by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs typically awarded only to colleges and universities provides DFRS with a unique capability to serve the community. The Volunteer Corporations (6) are educated and trained at the same level as the career service members, making Howard County a unique public safety agency. The Department of Fire and Rescue Services provides emergency response services and community risk reduction programs to the citizens of Howard County through a partnership of highly-trained career and volunteer personnel. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Continue to seek ways to reduce response times. If the SAMANTHA communications system for Fire/EMS volunteers is continued, seek better ways for it to be used, particularly within the volunteer setting.
- Repair and update various facilities. Repair the propane system at the training center to accommodate proper training during live fire exercises. The Concentra facility does not keep recruits engaged due to long wait times for scheduling and test results.
- Enhance diversity training.
- Continue to Volunteer Corporations within the culture of County Government, from the County Executive all the way down.

(c) **Department of Police.** Department of Police provides a sense of security for the citizens of Howard County by protecting life and property, reducing the opportunity for crime and disorder, enforcing the law, assisting victims and providing other police-related services as required by the community in a manner consistent with the values of a free society. The Police Department provides comprehensive, 24-hour public safety services to county residents. It maintains records and reports of all criminal activities. The Police Department cooperates with other county and state law enforcement agencies in public safety activities, analysis of data and assists them as needed. The department also provides public education and crime prevention services, assistance with problem resolution and addresses issues and concerns of citizens as they relate to local law enforcement. Following are the recommendations of the Transition Team:

- Update technology in order to further modernize the department and face new cybercrime threats.
- Continue the work of the Citizens Outreach Program and other community policing efforts to foster relationships with various ethnic groups within the community. Potentially expand this program to reach other groups, such as the youth and aging communities.
- Increase leadership training to address existing and emerging threats, such as cybercrime, human trafficking, and drug use.
- The K-9 Division should be restructured and centralized.
- The cost-effectiveness of the aviation program should be analyzed.
- Increased resources should be devoted to reducing human trafficking and major drug use since both crimes continue to trend upwards.
- Address the growing overtime budget, especially as it pertains to Merriweather Post Pavilion concerts and various running events sponsored around the County, and efforts need to be made to limit this cost.