

Prince
George's
County, MD
Proud
Get to Know Us



Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

2022

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Maryland General Assembly



As we begin 2022, we are continuing to address the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic.

While we have moved from a County with the highest infection rate in the State to a County with one of the lowest, there is still work to be done as the impacts of the pandemic continue to be felt by our residents. We must continue to work together to ensure that we are never again caught in a position of being unready to respond at the highest level to a threat that impacts the very lives of those we serve.

We have already accomplished so much towards this goal and the 2022 General Assembly Legislative Session allows us to continue this work while also moving our County forward in many ways.

As we navigated 2020 and 2021, our collective efforts helped us bring needed relief to those who are food insecure and those struggling to pay rent and mortgages. Our Stand Up and Deliver Program has distributed more than 8.5 million pounds of food and almost 4 million meals across the County since the pandemic began, and we have been a leader in providing funds through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program

(ERAP) which has allowed us to receive additional State funding to continue helping residents in need. As we come together for this 90-day session, we must continue doing all we can to ensure a prosperous and safe future for all those we serve.

One way we are going to do that is by making sure that our residents have access to healthy foods. The pandemic showed us all too clearly that the underlying health conditions we face such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes played a major role in the way COVID-19 impacted us. We know that we have the highest percentage of Low Income, Low Access (LILA) areas in the region at 15% and that more than half of the restaurant options in our inner beltway communities are of the fast-food variety. That is why we will continue to support legislation to allow grocers in our Healthy Food Priority Areas to sell beer and wine, as we know this tool will help them achieve profit margins that will attract them into these areas.

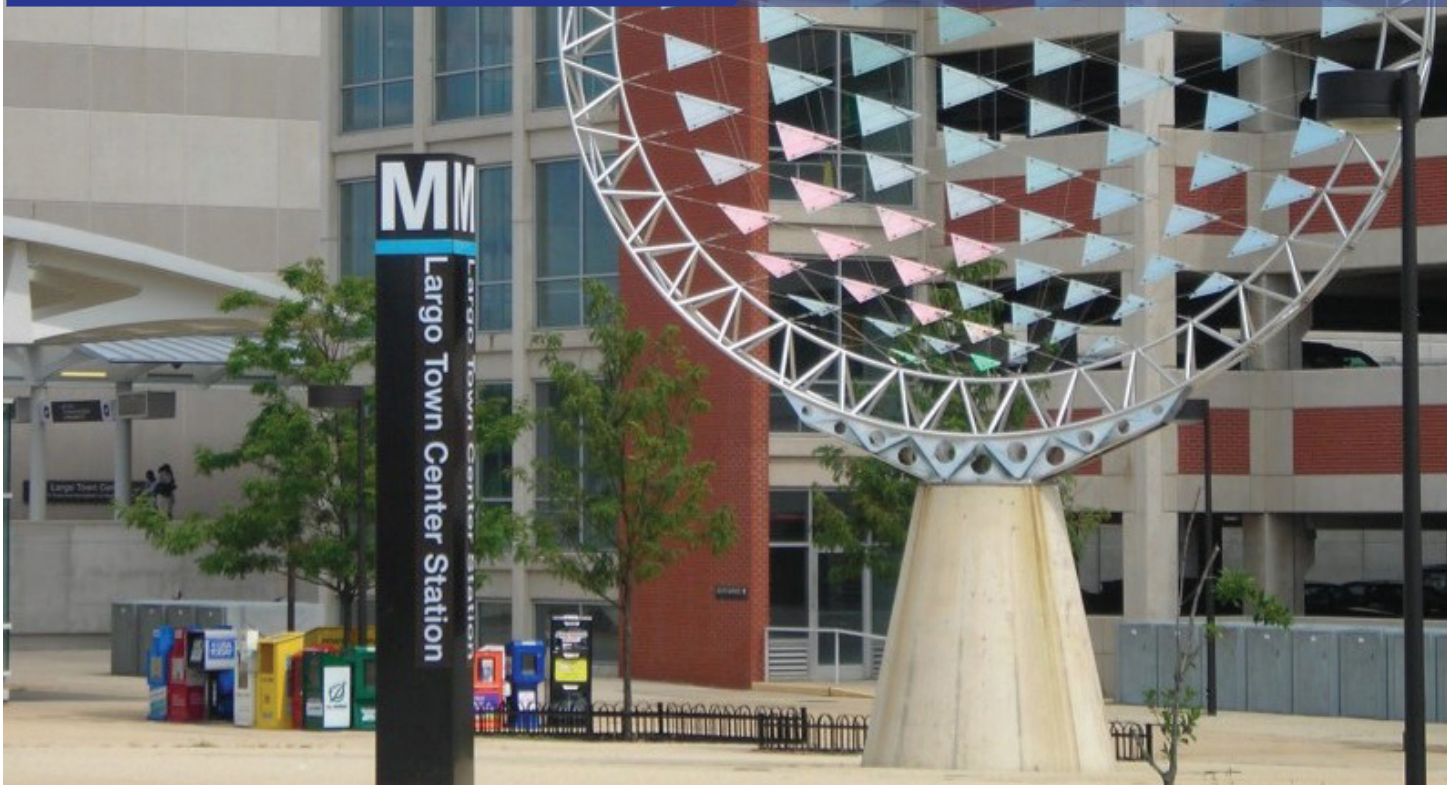
As we bring grocers into our underserved areas, we must also continue working to bring other amenities and resources that our residents want and deserve. That is why we will be seeking State funding to expand our Shopping Center Façade Program, as well as funding for key transportation projects such as the Blue Line Corridor and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) around our Metro stations to include New Carrollton, Greenbelt and Suitland.

As we bring quality development to the County, we know that housing will become more expensive, so we must ensure that our residents can remain in their homes and move into these upgraded communities. That is why we will be seeking State funding for our Right of First Refusal (ROFR) program and our Housing Investment Trust Fund (HITF), two programs that are already helping us to preserve affordable housing in the County.

In addition to these areas, we will also be focused on providing additional protections for seniors, securing additional resources to help us with our beautification efforts, providing quality healthcare through our new regional hospital, supporting efforts to bring a cancer treatment facility to the hospital, and helping WSSC secure needed funding as they continue to recover from the financial hardships they have incurred as a result of the pandemic. As we move into the 2022 Session, I am more confident than ever in the opportunities we have in front of us and the success I know we will have working together. I am Prince George's Proud of all we have done and all we are about to do.

Sincerely,

Angela D. Alsobrooks
Prince George's County Executive



Our Priorities are:

Arena Drive Interchange – The draft FY 2022-2027 State Consolidated Transportation Plan (CTP) contains funding for the design and construction of this critical interchange that will serve as a gateway to our UM Capital Region Medical Center and the development taking place in downtown Largo. Approximately \$8 million has been appropriated to begin the interchange process and advance the Central Avenue Corridor Connector Trail. We must ensure that this funding remains in the final draft of the CTP.

Blue Line Corridor – This transformational development effort stretches from the D.C. line, down Route 214 into Downtown Largo. During the 2021 General Assembly, working with both the Governor and our State Delegation, we were able to secure \$17.6 million and we will be seeking an additional \$21.4 million to continue road infrastructure improvements, the creation of complete streets, bike lanes and walk paths, and a street grid for developable parcels to keep this project moving forward.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) – The draft State CTP also includes funding to move forward the interchange project at the Greenbelt Metro Station and we must ensure that this funding remains in the final CTP, while also continuing to advocate for funding for transit projects around Metro stations in New Carrollton, Largo and Branch Avenue.

Road Safety – Several road projects are critical to improving vehicle and pedestrian safety along our roadways, helping to further our Vision Zero efforts to eliminate serious traffic-related injuries and fatalities by 2040. While we are pleased that the long-awaited interchange at Kerby Hill Road and Indian Head Highway will be complete by the end of 2021, we must continue to advocate for funding that will help improve safety, including additional interchanges and bicycle lanes along Route 210 and widening Maryland 197 between Route 50 and Route 450. Ensuring these projects remain in the State CTP is critical to improving safety along our roadways.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

Legislative Priorities

As we navigate and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must continue to make the investments in our County that will allow us to build our commercial tax base, so our government becomes less reliant on residential property taxes. We must continue to attract quality economic development to provide our residents with the retailers and amenities they want and deserve, without having to balance our budget on the backs of our residents.



During the 2022 General Assembly, we will support legislation to allow targeted grocery stores in our County to sell beer and wine. As we move forward in a post-COVID world, we need to ensure that all of our residents have access to the healthy food options that quality grocery stores provide. Prior to the pandemic, our County already had the most food-insecure areas in the region, with approximately 15 percent of our County being classified as “Low Income, Low Access.” Those areas have only become larger and more pronounced as the COVID-19 pandemic has raged on. It is imperative we ensure our residents have access to fresh vegetables and produce, along with other healthy food options. This legislation will provide a tool that helps increase the already slim profit margins for our grocery stores and will help us attract them into new developments in our underserved areas.

As we bring grocers into these shopping centers, we must also help the owners of the properties modernize the storefronts in a way that helps attract retailers. This is why we will be seeking \$5 million in State funding for our Façade Improvement Program to provide funds to property owners, that they must then match, to improve the look of their facilities.

As we redevelop areas around the County, we know that housing prices will increase, so we must make sure that we put programs in place to preserve

affordable housing to ensure that our residents can stay in their homes long-term, and our seniors can continue to age in place while enjoying all the new and updated amenities in their communities.

To support the County’s Equitable Economic Growth Vision and achieve the affordable housing preservation and production goals of our economic development agenda, our Department of Housing and Community Development recommends investments that will be primarily targeted to geographic areas within Prince George’s County that are at or near our current or soon to be Metro and rail stations. To accomplish this, we have already launched our Right of First Refusal (ROFR) program that allows the County, working with non-profits, to protect rental households at risk of displacement from their homes. The County recently established a new program with \$15 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds, to be used to help developers acquire the ROFR properties. We will be seeking an additional \$15 million from the State to help fund this program.

The County also recently established a Housing Investment Trust Fund, which we committed \$10 million towards to expand the creation of new affordable and mixed-income rental and homeownership opportunities in designated Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) areas. We will be seeking an additional \$15 million in State funding to continue this program.



The COVID-19 pandemic showed us all too clearly the health disparities that exist in our County, and as we continue to recover from the pandemic, we must do all we can to ensure that our residents have access to equitable and quality healthcare.

To help achieve these goals, we will be seeking State funding to increase the number of Community Based Health Centers in the County. We currently have our centers operating in our schools and with nine new schools coming online in the next couple of years, now is the time to create more centers that can serve students and the surrounding communities.

We will also be seeking State funding for a Comprehensive Opportunity Assessment (OA) for our new

UM Capital Region Medical Center to identify all the areas of concern for the hospital and discover any opportunities to improve the system that the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) has not yet realized. It will also analyze readmission rates to assess whether quality of care is contributing to readmissions and exacerbating capacity issues; the payor and provider relationship; identify ways to improve billing and collections; provide the hospital with better payment outcomes allowing for more flexibility to perform capital improvements, hire critical nursing staff, and hire FTEs to attract providers; and identify training opportunities to improve patient satisfaction and employee culture concerns.

The OA will show where improvements can be made to help ensure that the hospital operates efficiently and provides all the services our residents need and deserve.



Imperative to the success of every strong community is pride from those who live there. We know that our County has long struggled with trash and litter.

As we continue to address this issue, we will be pursuing legislation that will require the State to publish their litter pick-up schedules so we can see when and where they will be on State roads in our County, and how often they come to our County versus how often they work in other jurisdictions. This will help us ensure that the schedules are equitable, and it will allow us to better coordinate resources with the State so that when their trucks are cleaning State roads, our trucks can be on the County roads that feed into the State roads.

Our community is only as good as our residents, so we must be sure that we invest in people too, especially our seniors. As we have often said, our seniors are the backbone of our communities, but sadly, there are those who choose to prey on them and do them harm.

We must do all we can to ensure their safety and that is why we will continue to support legislation to create a centralized, confidential database aimed at ending the physical and mental abuse suffered by seniors at the hands of their caregivers. We advocated for this legislation in 2020 and 2021 and garnered much support for it, and we believe that with the support of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), we will get it across the finish line in 2022.

ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

Legislative Priorities



Capital Improvement Budget Requests Include:

- o \$4 million for the remaining State-funded portion of our amphitheater
 - o \$12.4 million for improvements to the Showplace Arena and Equestrian Center to help us continue to attract and keep shows like the Washington International Horse Show
 - o \$5.5 million for two transportation projects at the intersection of MD 223 and Woodyard Road and the intersection of MD 4 and Suitland Parkway
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- Supporting UMMS funding request for a Cancer Center at our regional hospital
 - Supporting WSSC requests for funding as they continue to recover from pandemic-related financial losses





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