



# Six-Point Economic Plan

## MISSION STATEMENT

In the County Executive's inaugural speech on December 1, 2014, he introduced his Six-Point Economic Plan to position Montgomery County for greater economic success. Collectively, these six points represent some of the most pressing priorities to grow Montgomery County's economy by enhancing transit and fiber connectivity, stimulating entrepreneurial activities, reducing office vacancy, improving regulatory process, and revamping workforce to meet both industry and community needs. Since his announcement, several new initiatives have been started, building on the success of the Six-Point Economic Plan.

## LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULTS AREAS

- **A Responsive, Accountable County Government**
- **An Effective and Efficient Transportation Network**
- **Healthy and Sustainable Communities**
- **A Strong and Vibrant Economy**
- **Vital Living for All of Our Residents**

## PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Lily Qi of the Office of the County Executive at 240.777.2524 or Pofen Salem of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2773 for more information regarding this initiative's operating budget.

## FY18 APPROVED ENHANCEMENTS

In addition to existing resources promoting the County's economic growth through strategic development efforts, the FY18 Approved Operating Budget provides an additional \$1.54 million in tax-supported resources for the implementation of the Six Point Economic Plan. Those efforts include implementing the Council-adopted Comprehensive Economic Strategy by more aggressive marketing, growing target industries, stimulating entrepreneurship, cultivating a deeper talent pool to meet the demands of the target industries, improving the experience of doing business, and assisting local companies to lease commercial office space to support their growth in Montgomery County. The FY18 Recommended Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budget also provides approximately \$24.1 million to construct and enhance bus transit services on major County routes to support economic growth and employment opportunities. Additionally, the CIP provides significant funding in support of transit-oriented development in Silver Spring, Wheaton, Shady Grove, Bethesda, White Flint, and White Oak.

### Office of the County Executive (CEX)

- Add funds to support the Innovation into Action Challenge through leveraging Federal, local, and private resources to support County companies access to emerging international markets, provide collaboration between County expertise and global leaders, and strengthen the County's standing as a gateway for the world (\$50,000).
- Add funds for WorkSource Montgomery to enhance programs and staffing to meet the target industries' talent demands and to cover the operating costs of sharing commercial office space with the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation and Visit Montgomery (\$675,000).
- Provide funds to the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation to hire additional staff for programs

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in marketing and branding, growing target industries, especially cybersecurity and information technologies, and business attraction and retention (\$750,000).

- Allocate resources to support creation of the Business Solutions Group (\$240,000).
- Continue funding the Excellence in Business Services initiative to improve the experience and perception of doing business in Montgomery County.

## Department of Finance

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- Enhance the MOVE (Make Office Vacancies Extinct) Program to provide additional leasing incentives for companies located in targeted County areas (\$250,000).
- Add funds for BioHealth Innovation, Inc. to enhance its Entrepreneur-in-Residence program and launch another class of Health IT accelerators in 2017 (\$250,000).
- Shift funding for the Life Science and Data Analytics initiatives, Bethesda Green and Rockville Economic Development, Inc. contracts and software licenses to the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) to streamline program management and marketing efforts (\$377,000).

## Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

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- Maintain Permit Fees at current rates reflecting continued elimination of the automation fee and reduced permit fees for commercial building permits.
- Maintain support at current levels for continued improvement of permit processing times.

## Department of Technology Services (DTS)

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- Continue funding in FY18: \$680,000 for ultraMontgomery CIP; \$80,000 for business outreach and policy development; \$120,000 for Senior Planet Montgomery technology training for older adults; and \$150,000 for Youth Coding and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives.

## Department of Transportation (DOT)

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- Provide capital funding of \$21.5 million to construct a high quality Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on US 29 that leverages \$10 million of Federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) funds.
- Provide \$2.6 million in funds for the new Ride On Extra, limited stop bus service, in the MD 355 corridor beginning in October 2017.
- Provide enhanced Transit Service in Clarksburg to help employees access new employment opportunities at the Clarksburg Outlets.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### Offices of the County Executive

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- Improving the perception and experience of doing business in Montgomery County is a top priority of the Office of the County Executive to expand the tax base and grow quality jobs reflective of our community's quality human capital and aspirations. This Excellence in Business Services initiative includes the following key elements:
  - An integrated business portal with a user-friendly interface for starting and operating a business in Montgomery County with easy access to information and resources from multiple departments and agencies;
  - Digitization of forms across County departments to reduce time and effort required in interacting with the

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- government;
  - Targeted customer services training programs for front-line employees; and
  - Focus on department-specific issues related to doing business in Montgomery County.
  - Innovation entrepreneurship-MC Square is envisioned as an integrated program that links all innovation-based entrepreneurship activities and programs for better marketing, coordination and collaboration to cultivate a stronger entrepreneurial climate in the community, grow new companies, and strengthen the ecosystem. Several key elements have been advanced in the past two years, including:
    - Relevant Health: a new Health IT accelerator was launched in 2016 and a second cohort will be launched in 2017.
    - Partnership with 1776: Washington, DC's premier tech entrepreneurship hub has given Montgomery County-based early-stage tech companies access to a regional asset for program support, mentorship, work space, and collaboration opportunities.
    - Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI) Social Entrepreneurship: A major contractor for United States Agency for International Development (USAID), based in Bethesda, partnered with Montgomery County's Office of Innovation to launch an innovation challenge competition. This effort leveraged Federal funding and private-sector support to cultivate social entrepreneurship by encouraging entrepreneurs to use technologies to solve problems in underdeveloped countries and regions, while connecting local entrepreneurs with global markets.
  - Two new elements of MC Square will be added in FY18:
    - Launch Academy: A youth entrepreneurship program in partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and WorkSource Montgomery for MCPS graduates or dropouts who are not planning to attend college right away.
    - Startup Montgomery: This initiative will tie all entrepreneurial resources and tools together for more effective marketing, coordination, and collaboration.

## Department of Finance

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- The MOVE Program was expanded in February 2015 as an innovative program that focuses on attracting new businesses and new jobs to the County and to reduce vacant commercial office space. New businesses receive a one-time grant of \$8 per square foot toward their new lease agreement if they meet grant requirements. MOVE will also provide additional leasing incentives for companies located in targeted County areas. As of February 2017, the MOVE Program has provided nearly \$1.14 million in grants, attracting 44 new businesses and 271 new jobs to the County.
- BioHealth Innovation, Inc. (BHI) is contracted to manage two County business incubators - Rockville and Germantown Innovation Centers - to stimulate entrepreneurial activities. BHI's key activities include:
  - Partner with MITRE Corporation to broaden the use of the Rockville Innovation Center (RIC). MITRE operates Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs), including the National Cybersecurity FFRDC.
  - Support and attract startups and early-stage technology companies with a variety of resources, such as BHI "Entrepreneurs-in-Residence," MITRE technologists, technical mentorship and tactical workshops on technology development from various corporate and investment partners.
  - Partner with Montgomery College's Pinkney Innovation Complex for Science and Technology at the Germantown Innovation Center. Replicate the programming platforms being implemented at RIC with a vision of making Montgomery County a nationally recognized center of biomedical commercialization.
  - With the additional \$125,000 in funding, BHI will enhance its Entrepreneur-in-Residence program and launch another class of Health IT accelerator in 2017.

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## Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

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- Permit processing has improved greatly and streamlining the development process continues to be a priority for the County Executive. For FY18, the County Executive will continue funding in DPS for the following activities:
  - Maintain initial review and comment within 30 days for properly prepared and electronically submitted commercial plans;
  - Reduce the processing time for sediment control plans;
  - Maintain more frequent development review meetings with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC);
  - Continue the Department's move to electronic plan review and electronic permit processing; and
  - Improve coordination of construction that impacts public rights-of-way in County business districts, while facilitating orderly construction activities.

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## Department of Technology Services (DTS)

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- ultraMontgomery supports deployment and use of high-speed fiber networks to attract knowledge-based employers, innovators and entrepreneurs in biohealth/biosciences, information technology and cybersecurity, financial services, and advanced manufacturing. The goal is to cost-effectively expand access to networks through public-private partnerships, testbeds, and business outreach; to connect people with opportunities and further drive economic growth; and to link our business, academic and Federal institutions and transit-oriented smart-growth communities together as a Smart Connected County. ultraMontgomery has implemented the following key programs:
  - The first of three private sector direct fiber routes between Montgomery County and the cloud-service data centers in Ashburn, Virginia has been completed and two additional routes will be deployed in 2017. More than 90 percent of the east coast's Internet traffic passes through Ashburn data centers.
  - Construction of the East County Fiber Highway is scheduled to be completed in 2017. It will form the backbone to support wifi on Bus Rapid Transit options, connectivity in the White Oak Science Gateway, expansion of Internet of Things partnerships with the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), and economic development partnerships in the East County.
  - The ultraMontgomery Senior Planet Montgomery program -
    - This program, in partnership with Montgomery County Public Libraries and Department of Recreation, provides technology training for older adults to ensure that all residents can participate in the Internet economy. It supports use of TeenWorks Tech Connect trainers and recruits volunteer trainers through the Jewish Council for the Aging and Montgomery Volunteers. It also provides new training aimed at populations for whom English is not their first language and will focus on increasing private support from businesses and organizations (such as AARP).
  - The ultraMontgomery Youth Coding program -
    - A multi-agency and multi-departmental initiative, provides training, mentoring, and equipment support to create opportunities for young people in Montgomery County to learn computer coding, game design, programming Raspberry Pi/Arduino devices, and similar Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) skills.
  - The ultraMontgomery business outreach and policy development program-
    - Focuses on modernizing advanced networking policies, including balanced management of deployment of 5G technology in business districts, and fiber conduit requirements in new development.

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## Department of Transportation

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- The Purple Line light rail project continues to be the County's top transportation priority. The County continues to partner with the Maryland Transit Administration to implement the Purple Line project and the associated County-funded projects (Capital Crescent Trail, Bethesda Metro South Entrance, and Silver Spring Green Trail).
  - The current State-led BRT planning study on Veirs Mill Road will result in a Recommended Alternative in FY17, at which point the County Executive will evaluate options for design and construction. In the short-term, the County will continue to encourage the Maryland Department of Transportation to fund MetroExtra service on Veirs Mill Road.
  - In FY17, the County Council approved \$5 million of funding to advance the BRT on MD 355 to a Recommended Alternative. In FY18, planning work on this corridor will transition from the State to MCDOT.
  - The County Executive continues to support the State plan to seek Federal funding for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) and plans to initiate a workgroup to discuss other funding options to move this project forward.
  - MCDOT will enhance transit service in Clarksburg by expanding the hours of service in the area during the week and introducing new weekend service to help employees access new employment opportunities at the Clarksburg Outlets.
  - Provide \$2.6 million in funds for the new Ride On Extra, limited stop bus service, in the MD 355 corridor beginning in October 2017. Seventeen new specially branded buses will operate every 10 minutes during the AM and PM peak periods on this new route between the Lakeforest Transit Center and the Medical Center Metro Station.

#### Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) - Non-Departmental Account

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For its second official year of existence, MCEDC will focus on marketing, business attraction and retention, and growing entrepreneurship in target industries. Specifically, the organization will focus on the following:

- Retain, expand and attract businesses in target industries or sectors outlined in the County's Comprehensive Economic Strategy, including biohealth, cybersecurity and IT, financial and professional services, advanced manufacturing, and corporate and regional headquarters;
- Build a cybersecurity industry with the active engagement of the cybersecurity working group;
- Establish targeted clusters of entrepreneurship; and
- Implement comprehensive marketing and branding campaign across the nation and foreign marketplaces.

#### WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. (WSM) - Non-Departmental Account

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- Develop industry-focused job training and placement strategies in target industries with growing demand including cybersecurity, biosciences, hospitality, healthcare, and construction.
- Develop training and certification programs supporting job demand in green and energy/sustainability industries.
- Improve services for job seekers through the County's three job centers in Wheaton, Germantown, and Silver Spring.
- Develop a pilot summer youth career exposure program in partnership with MCPS.

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