



FY25 RECOMMENDED OPERATING BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



Climate Change...

- ★ A study to develop a zero-emission bus fleet transition plan will be completed in spring 2024. The plan will contain concrete strategies to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 in accordance with the goals outlined in the County's Climate Action Plan. The study includes an evaluation of current and future facilities necessary for the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet. The County continues to purchase zero-emission vehicles, including both battery electric and hydrogen fuel cell buses, to work toward the Climate Action Plan goals.
- ★ Include funding to implement a ban on the sale and use of gas-powered leaf blowers, including outreach to affected retailers and lawn care companies, and to fund an electric leaf blower rebate program.




Racial Equity & Social Justice...

- ★ Develop, through the Division of Business Relations and Compliance, an enforcement program of the existing Minority, Female, and Disabled-Owned Business law to be more proactive rather than reactive/complaints-based.
- ★ All executive branch departments will develop and implement language access plans in order to provide high-quality services to the County's multicultural and multilingual communities. Department action plans will include development of materials in simplified language and training to front-line staff regarding interpretation and translation standards.
- ★ Bolster funding of \$300,000 for the Latino Health Initiative for an expanded Community Health Worker program, an expansion of the Welcome Back Center to transition internationally trained health professionals to obtain health care credentials in the County that will help address healthcare workforce shortages, and enhanced

Highlights

funding for communications with the Latino community.

- ★ Boost the funding of \$150,000 for the Asian American Health Initiative to expand the Asian American Center of Excellence Micro-grants program, and to increase funds for a multi-lingual health navigation service and a medical interpretation program, for Asian American residents.
- ★ In coordination with the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, address the racial inequities and disparities present in all aspects of the food system.
- ★ Increase engagement with multilingual communities through community forums and meetings, and social media platforms in languages other than English.
- ★ Add \$360,000 in FY25 funding to begin the revitalization of World Languages collections, beginning with purchases in Spanish and Chinese, evenly distributed.
- ★ Shift the focus of the Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH) service area toward prevention services and away from distribution of Federal funding for emergency rental assistance, as prevention services are more cost effective than shelters or motels. The Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program (eRAP), which began during the COVID-19 pandemic, ends in FY24. Funding of almost \$842,000 is recommended in FY25 for a team within DHHS to work directly with households to help them stay housed.
- ★ Expand community partnerships to deploy an additional 69,000 free laptop computers to low-income, senior, African American, and Latino residents and provide an educational awareness campaign to help 28,000 Montgomery County families find low-cost broadband alternatives to the discontinued Federal and State Affordable Connectivity Program, which provided broadband subsidies for low-income households. TEBS continues to seek Maryland broadband grant funding to expand MoCoNet, the County's residential broadband network to affordable housing developments. Additionally, TEBS is expanding the Montgomery Connects Digital Equity Coalition to leverage an AmeriCorps staff planning grant in partnership with Digital Harbor in Baltimore.



Thriving Youth and Families...

- ★ Complete and deploy a branded outreach van to create an outdoor pop-up library experience in any safe location, provide wireless internet access, and visit housing communities, childcare centers, recreation centers, senior centers, and group homes. In 2024, the Outreach Team will continue expanding its mission of public service beyond the library's physical walls with the launch of the first all-electric mobile library outreach info vehicle in Maryland. The need for the Outreach Team

to bring the library to the people was not just about a new delivery model for library resources and services but also the agility and efficiency to target specific zip codes, housing communities, age groups, and ethnic backgrounds that were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

- ★ Increase Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary (EBB) services and expand existing out of school time programming with the addition of two new sites: Eastern and Benjamin Banneker Middle Schools.
- ★ Launched free youth water polo clinics to residents in the Long Branch and Upper County outdoor pool areas to provide an opportunity to increase engagement in water sports that are traditionally not available in the area. Aquatics offered water safety lessons at outdoor pools to engage patrons in safe practices around water.
- ★ Increased financial assistance available to qualified residents from \$200 to \$400 per person per calendar year in an effort to make more Recreation programming available to County residents that receive social services from other County agencies.
- ★ Bolster funding for the Public Libraries' collection acquisitions budget to meet demand for digital materials through the Hoopla platform for ebooks, eaudiobooks, emagazines, emusic, and evideo.
- ★ Provide approximately \$3.3 million to support various school health initiatives, including approximately \$1.3 million to annualize new school health room staff in community schools, \$908,000 for seven new community schools that are expected to be designated in FY25, \$580,000 for the opening of a School Based Health Center at South Lake Elementary School, almost \$385,000 to cover inflation in school based health center contracts, and \$150,000 in additional funding to improve recruitment and retention of bilingual therapists in the Linkages to Learning program.
- ★ Expand capacity in the dental program to meet increased demand. There are over 750 youth and 450 adults waitlisted for DHHS' dental services. In a promising development for dental care access, Medicaid has recently expanded dental care eligibility to adults ages 19-59, a population that did not previously have access to Medicaid dental coverage. This \$860,000 expansion provides essential dental care to the County's most vulnerable residents while offsetting costs with newly available Medicaid revenues. With additional staff, the dental program will be able to reduce its waitlists and improve access to dental services through the Mobile Health Clinic.
- ★ Support the Health Care for the Uninsured programs with a \$1.8 million (24 percent) increase for Montgomery Cares reimbursement rates, the second consecutive year of double-digit rate increases. Compared to FY23, the recommended FY25 rate increase reimburses providers with \$50 more per

encounter, an increase of over 66 percent in two years. In addition, the Care for Kids (CFK) programs are supported with an additional \$180,000 to improve reproductive health care access, and \$140,000 for administrative support to accommodate increased CFK enrollment and ensure clients' Medicaid or insurance providers are properly billed for services rendered.

- ★ Continue the phased implementation of long-term food security initiatives that began with Special Appropriation #24-37. The Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR) will continue to implement the Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger through the Retail Food Access Program, the Food as Medicine Program, School-based Food Security Partnership Grants, and grants to support community-based initiatives. Additionally, OFSR will work to strengthen local food system infrastructure through investments in projects that aggregate, process, and/or distribute food from local producers to enhance immediate and long-term food security in the region.



A Growing Economy...

- ★ Continuing the affordable housing initiative, AHC Inc. was selected as a partner to redevelop the former Department of Recreation headquarters property with 195 for-sale and rental housing units affordable to households earning between 30% and 70% of the area median income (AMI). This project has come to completion and a groundbreaking ceremony was held January 2023. This project is the County's largest-ever affordable housing project.
- ★ Building on the County Executive's commitment to expand affordable housing in the County, the Department of General Services' Office of Planning and Development continue to refine a plan to redevelop the Burtonsville Park and Ride site. This will include a new County-owned parking garage and approximately 300 apartments, of which 30% will be affordable for households earning between 30% and 85% of the AMI. In FY23, the office received a State grant to support the project.
- ★ Increased staffing and efficiencies allowed the Business Center to assist more than 1,000 businesses to start and grow in the County, an increase of 230 percent from 2022.
- ★ The Office of Agriculture is partnering with the Institute for Local Self-Reliance and the University of Maryland Extension Master Gardener Program on the installation of a Composting Education Hub that will be used to train gardeners and farmers on how to properly compost food scraps.
- ★ Proactive outreach - Business Liaisons in the Business Center spend about two days a week engaging businesses in the community to better assist and understand their challenges.

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- ★ Launched a client management system that provides faster, more reliable customer service to businesses. The system also ensures the County is tracking required metrics for the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act.
 - ★ Assigned Business Liaisons to regional offices to create greater synergies between the Regional Service Centers and County's service delivery. The Executive's support for more liaisons is to ensure all Regional Centers and Council Districts have at least one Business Liaison to personalize service delivery to more businesses.
 - ★ The Wheaton Urban District activated a Community Access Grant to allow non-profits and public community groups to rent/utilize County resources and spaces within the Wheaton Urban District at a reduced rate.
 - ★ The Friendship Heights Urban District supports marketing and communications for local businesses along the corridor, providing social media outreach, business listings, and promotional activities to drive customers to retailers and restaurants.
 - ★ The Silver Spring Urban District coordinated quarterly meetings of the 'marketing minds of Silver Spring' to discuss objectives for aligned and strategic marketing, offer networking opportunities, and provide training to participants. The Urban District will extend a social media, branding, and marketing series to local small businesses in partnership with the Business Center in the remainder of FY24.



A Greener County...

- ★ Added a low-speed, high-torque shredder to reduce the size of yard trim material at the yard trim facility. While the average throughput per hour is lower than the high-speed, horizontal grinders, this unit has significantly more uptime and burns about 60% less fuel. The Material Management Section is focused on selecting capital equipment to increase operating efficiency and reduce operating and maintenance costs at both the grinding operation and the compost facility.
- ★ Enhance efforts to combat climate change with funding to build out the County's electric vehicle charging infrastructure, assist under-resourced building owners comply with Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS) with subsidized energy audits, and provide contractual support to help low-income residents access Federal incentives and tax credits newly-available under the Inflation Reduction Act. A position and operating funds are added to develop a solar power strategic plan as well.
- ★ Provide funding and staff to implement zero waste initiatives that divert material from the traditional waste stream, like food scraps collection and processing and

expanding the type of materials that can be recycled.

- ★ Increase funding for Clean Water Montgomery grants (previously Watershed Grants), which earn credit toward the County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit on private property.
- ★ Develop a solar microgrid project to support zero emission bus fueling at the Gaithersburg Bus Depot. The Division of Fleet Management Services is working with the Department of General Services' Office of Energy and Sustainability to plan the microgrid, which will provide a clean and resilient energy source to charge electric buses and produce green hydrogen for fuel cell buses by using electricity to extract hydrogen from water.
- ★ Expand the Charge Montgomery program plan for the expansion of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across Montgomery County. This program helps the County educate and engage with the public on EV charging, including creating a survey and Geographic Information System map to visualize current and future charging station locations relative to points of interest and equity census tracts.
- ★ Through its Montgomery Energy Connection program, the Department of Environmental Protection launched Electrify MC pilot program, a residential electrification help desk and direct incentives to encourage residents to switch from fossil fuels to efficient electric options in their home, in advance of the incentives that will be available through the Inflation Reduction Act.
- ★ Procure approximately 100 electric Ride On buses in FY24-27. The buses will operate at the Silver Spring and Gaithersburg bus depots to fully utilize the solar microgrids at these locations.
- ★ Provided a Ford Mach-E electric vehicle for the Montgomery County Department of Police as a pilot to explore the suitability of electric vehicles for police patrol use. Wide-scale availability of zero emission patrol vehicles is expected by 2025.
- ★ Collaborate with the multifamily developer, Montgomery Housing Partnership, on development agreements and refining concept plans for locating the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center (WACC) in a future affordable multifamily building within Wheaton Arts and Entertainment District. WACC will be a community-oriented arts incubator that will include performance spaces, classrooms, gallery space, and administrative space for local arts organizations.



Easier Commutes...

- ★ Install canopy solar panels on a parking facility roof to provide energy for

low-voltage systems. Actively seeking opportunities to partner with Montgomery County Green Bank and/or other stakeholders to install solar canopies on garages in the Parking Lot Districts (PLD) that can provide discounted electricity to Low to Moderate Income (LMI) customers and the County. Community solar project has gone through the request for proposal (RFP) and is currently at the award stage. The PLD is evaluating Garage 4, 5, and 7 to determine the first installation.

- ★ The Ride On Reimagined study will guide the future direction of the County's transit system through data analysis and community engagement. Goals, outcomes, and performance measures have been established for three priority areas: Safety and Vision Zero; Environment and Climate Resiliency; and Economic Development and Equitable Access. County residents, transit passengers, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders have participated throughout the study's development. Service concepts are expected to be finalized in spring 2024, with service and implementation plans to be completed shortly thereafter. The implementation plans will include service changes to be phased in over several years.
- ★ Implement new security guard services contract to enhance PLD off-street parking security and incident reporting.
- ★ Implement the Great Seneca Transit Network in two phases to provide frequent transit options and improve mobility and access to crucial jobs in the healthcare, biotech, and educational sectors. The first phase, which includes Ride On Extra service on the new Pink and Lime transit lines, will launch in fall 2024. The Pink route links the busy Shady Grove corridor with Life Sciences Center via Medical Center Drive. The Lime route uses I-370 to provide an express route to RIO, Crown Farm, and the heart of the Life Science Center.
- ★ Convert single space meter lots in Wheaton PLD to master meter pay and display or pay by plate operations. Wheaton Lots are converting legacy coin-only single space meters with master meters which allows pay and display (coin, cash or credit card) or pay-by-cell.
- ★ Convert end of life single space meters in Transportation Management Districts (TMD) and Parking Lot Districts (PLD) to new and more capable single space meter systems. TMD off street and PLD lots/on-street replace legacy smart meters with recently awarded single space smart meter contract.



An Affordable, Welcoming County
for a Lifetime...

- ★ Provide funds for the new Rent Stabilization Program to be fully operational in FY25. This program establishes maximum allowable rent increases to stabilize rents

in the County while ensures landlords can earn a fair return on their investment.

- ★ Allocate \$160.5 million in funding to produce and preserve affordable housing units in Montgomery County. This funding commitment includes the allocation of \$13.5 million in the Montgomery Housing Initiative (MHI) Fund; \$97 million in the Affordable Housing Acquisition and Preservation CIP project; and a total of \$50 million in FY24 and FY25 in the Nonprofit Preservation Fund Capital Improvements Program.
- ★ Provide \$56 million in new resources for the Montgomery Housing Initiative Fund to continue various programs and projects dedicated to creating and preserving affordable housing and related services. The funding will provide for the renovation of distressed housing, creation of housing units for residents with special needs, rental assistance and rapid rehousing, homeless prevention and relocation assistance, homeowner downpayment assistance, home accessibility rehabilitation, services to the "Building Neighborhoods to Call Home" and "Housing First" programs, and the creation of mixed-income housing.
- ★ DHCA's Multifamily Housing Development team successfully closed thirteen residential real estate loan transactions in FY23. Montgomery County provided more than \$96 million towards these developments. These transactions preserved, rehabilitated, or produced 975 units of affordable housing at an average cost of \$98,847 per unit throughout the County.
- ★ Create a new Rental Housing Division to support more synergy and collaboration between the Office of Landlord and Tenant Affairs (OLTA) and the Rent Stabilization Program, realigning some programs among different divisions for more effective operations, and adding needed staffing to close operational gaps and enhance service delivery.
- ★ Fund staffing in the Licensing and Regulation Program to resolve chronic service gaps, increase revenue collection, and enhance the department's capacity to ensure that all rental housing and common ownership communities comply with the County's licensing requirements, and in the Code Enforcement Unit to implement re-inspections for those troubled and at-risk properties as required in Executive Regulation 2-17.
- ★ Support the implementation and enforcement of Bill 22-23 Short-term Residential Rental reassigned from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA). The annualized funding allows for improvement of the licensing application processes and enhancement of required housing inspections. The funding sources come from the adjusted licensing fees that allow the program to be self-supporting.
- ★ DHCA's Code Enforcement Unit continues to implement a contract established in 2003 with the City of Takoma Park to inspect the City's residential rental facilities.

This agreement was established to ensure the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of persons residing in over 500 residential rental facilities and 3,200 rental units within the City of Takoma Park.

- ★ Create a Manager II position to manage the new Rental Housing Division to ensure rent stabilization mandates are fully implemented and integrated with other relevant services and functions across the Department.
- ★ Allocate \$800,000 to reduce long-standing waitlists and increase capacity in programs serving vulnerable populations, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. The CE Recommended budget increases capacity for the following programs, each of which have over 150 waitlisted individuals: Adult Protective Services case management (\$197,000); Home Care Services (\$161,000); and Coordination of Community Services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (\$63,000). The Medicaid Community First Choice Nurse Monitoring program budget increases by \$180,000 and is fully offset by revenue. Almost \$200,000 is allocated to continue services that were previously made possible with federal funds, including Senior Lunch site at the Silver Spring Recreation and Aquatic Center (\$148,000) and prenatal engagement initiatives for vulnerable populations (\$50,000).
- ★ Enhances supplemental funding for reimbursements to critical providers, including \$697,000 for a 3% increase to the Developmental Disability Provider Supplement and the Adult Medical Day Care Provider Supplement. This budget also includes \$112,000 to increase respite care provider reimbursement rates by \$2 per hour on average.
- ★ Increase licensing fees on multifamily rental units and other housing types to align with the fees charged by surrounding jurisdictions and offset staffing needs. The revenue generated from the licensing fees will be utilized to directly support programmatic operations and improve service delivery in Licensing and Registration, Code Enforcement, Landlord-Tenant Mediation, Rent Stabilization, and the Short-term Residential Rental programs.
- ★ Add one Program Manager II position in the Common Ownership Communities (COC) Program to manage and administer the Revitalization for Troubled and Distressed Common Ownership Communities CIP. This new loan program will help COC communities to address needed capital improvements and avoid loss or displacement of housing units, particularly for low-income homeowners.
- ★ Continue to actively underwrite affordable housing loans to preserve and produce affordable housing. Three developments for multi-family projects have already been identified for potential funding in FY25. These developments would preserve or produce a total of 655 units, including 357 affordable units.
- ★ Add staff in the Office of Landlord-Tenant Affairs (OLTA) to administer and

coordinate all service requests, reduce the backlog as required by County codes, and provide additional support and coordination for the new Rent Stabilization Program and staff in the Affordable Housing Program to review purchase applications for Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU), provide training and oversight to developers after the MPDU purchase, and collaborate with other agencies to support development of senior housing in the County.



Safe Neighborhoods...

- ★ Enhance real-time crime fighting by adding funds for the expansion of FUSUS software, which tracks technologies related to cameras, license plate readers, and the Drone as First Responder (DFR) Program.
- ★ Expanded the Drone as First Responder Pilot program, which is an end-to-end public safety drone program, to increase the effectiveness of police response and to reduce incidences of unnecessary use of force through improved surveillance and information on calls. Information on whether a suspect is armed can inform and improve officer decision-making.
- ★ Integrate \$900,000 into the base budget for the Non-Profit Security Grant Program, transitioning from one-time funding for non-profit and faith-based organizations to augment costs for security personnel or other security planning measures for non-profit organizations located in Montgomery County.
- ★ Allocate additional financial resources to support Regional Preparedness Program personnel, previously funded by a federal grant, to maintain stability and continue critical services provided.
- ★ Coordinated with the Office of Grants Management (OGM) to launch the FY24 Nonprofit Security Grant Program. A total of \$900,000 was awarded to the 136 applicants. Expedited an additional \$311,000 in security funding to Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and Zoroastrian communities to invest in security measures to protect their facilities.
- ★ On behalf of all County agencies, OEMHS pursued reimbursement for COVID-19 expenses incurred by the County through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance program. Over \$218 million was submitted for consideration. Of that, \$77 million has been reimbursed to the County, \$33 million more has been approved, and the remaining \$108 million is currently under review by FEMA.
- ★ Silver Spring Urban District and Wheaton Urban District will implement initiatives to address the increase of hazardous conditions in heavily damaged streetscape and

roadside areas. The completed projects will improve walkability and make the areas safer for pedestrians.

- ★ Expand the innovative Drone as First Responder program allowing for quick and efficient police response to incidents in Bethesda, Gaithersburg, and Germantown.
- ★ In partnership with Prosecutorial Performance Indicators and researchers at the University of Maryland, Towson University, and George Mason University, the State's Attorney's Office conducted a study on criminal prosecution in Montgomery County. The "Final Report on Racial Justice in Prosecution in Montgomery County" details key findings, study methodology, descriptive results, statistical analysis, and recommendations. The Office will maintain a data dashboard including key graphics and highlights.
- ★ Added an additional EMS Duty Officer (EMS702) to the Bethesda area in FY24, increasing the supervisory coverage in the field. This directly improves the geographic coverage of the entire county and reduces staffing stress for each of the three supervisors. This additional supervisor improves relationships with our field clinicians and hospital partners and increases supervisory attendance to high acuity patients, such as those suffering cardiac arrests or significant trauma.
- ★ Placed a reserve ambulance at Station 33 and allowed the local fire-rescue departments to staff the unit in response to patient transportation demand surges.
- ★ Applied for, received, and managed over \$4.6 million in federal Homeland Security grants on behalf of public safety agencies, funding a number of key personnel, equipment enhancements, trainings, exercises, and plans.
- ★ Completed the microgrid installation at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF). The microgrid interfaces with the large solar installation previously completed to further increase energy independence, environmental protection, and cost savings. This project received State and National accolades.
- ★ Provides \$1.5 million of general funds to replace an ending Federal grant to continue Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT) services and expand capacity from five to seven teams. MCOTs are a crucial intervention for individuals with behavioral health issues and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations, interactions with law enforcement, and incarcerations.
- ★ Fully deployed a High School Cadet Training Program in collaboration with MCPS. The cadet program now includes Emergency Medical Technician Training geared towards preparing Cadets for successful performance on national licensure requirements, and preparation for professional Fire Fighter careers.
- ★ Launched a Fire Camp for 20 girls to encourage women to enter the fire fighting and public safety profession. The training received for participants will count

towards the overall requirements for successful completion of the Training Cadet program available as a partnership between Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service and Montgomery County Public Schools.

- ★ Enhance Vision Zero efforts by increasing funding for the Safe Routes to School Program.
- ★ Continue to expand weather and flood monitoring equipment throughout the County to enhance real-time situational awareness and forecasting in preparation for and response to major weather events.
- ★ Redeployed several EMS resources in FY24 to improve EMS capacity/coverage, including an ambulance (A725C) from Station 25 to Station 18 (A718); the chase car (ALS741) from Rescue 1 to Station 1 (ALS701); and a daywork (Monday - Friday) medic unit (M732).
- ★ Improved the quality of care to EMS patients by providing access to new equipment (IV pumps) and processes (norepinephrine administration) that could potentially improve outcomes following out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. These improvements reduce the cognitive workload of the clinician and eliminate error points in patient care.
- ★ Coordinate a Community Preparedness event for September 2024 to educate citizens on topics such as emergency preparedness; Alert Montgomery; Narcan education and training; Avoid, Deny, and Defend training; and Public Access Trauma Care for the residents and visitors of the County.
- ★ Maximize the impact of existing resources through adjustments to the Emergency Medical Services disposition unit and redeploying staff from an advanced life support chase car to establish a new EMS Duty Officer to improve health outcomes in diverse areas of the County.



Effective, Sustainable
Government...

- ★ Montgomery County received the following National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Awards in 2023:
 - A Human Services Responses to Emergencies: Culturally Competent and

Highlights

Trauma Informed Care

- Case Portal for Subpoena Management
- County Telework Program
- Customer Engagement Analysis
- Digitization of County Contracting
- Emergency Management Specialist II
- Holiday Coaster Campaign
- Holiday Park Senior Center Outdoor Fitness Equipment
- Inclusion Multi-Sport Program
- Kids Day Out
- Latino Health Initiative Asthma Management Program
- Let Her Shine- Girls Volleyball
- Making a Difference: 2022 Summer Reading Challenge! At Montgomery County Public Libraries, MD
- MCG Deliveries Mentorship Experiences
- Project Prom Dress
- Residential deck detail
- Senior Adventures Summer Camp
- The Department of Permitting Services Special Events Permit
- Truck Day featuring the "Paint the Plow" Contest
- Violent Crimes Information Center

★ A new Election Worker Management System is currently being built to leverage a modern framework and mitigate vulnerabilities in the existing application. The new system will streamline the communications, recruitment, training, and staffing of election workers and Future Vote students as well as the future administration of elections.

★ Developed partnerships with Collaboration Council, WorkForce Montgomery, Latin American Youth Council, and local municipalities in support of increasing out of school activities for children and youths.

★ Expand the use of the Office of Grants Management's Outgoing Grants online application platform to more efficiently and expeditiously manage grant agreement approvals, documentation tracking, processes transparency, and overall accountability.

★ Planned and executed ten operating budget forums during development of the FY25 County Executive's Recommended Operating Budget to provide residents an opportunity to have their voices heard. Three of the budget forums were conducted in a language other than English (Spanish, Chinese, and Amharic).

- ★ Improved nine workflows used by Montgomery County department users to submit and track requests to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), increasing ease of use and providing better visibility of request progress.
- ★ Implemented a new website chatbot powered by generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) technology with close consultation from TEBS, MC311, Community Engagement Cluster (CEC), and public safety stakeholders; resident focus groups were also conducted with assistance from Innovation@MCG. The chatbot, Monty 2.0, replaces the existing website chatbot (Monty 1.0) previously deployed in April 2021. Implementing the Monty 2.0 chatbot improves the resident experience and exponentially expands the information available for public consumption, allowing residents to acquire County services-related information from over 3,000 topics.
- ★ OIG began outreach efforts to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to help educate MCPS' employees on how they can help the Office of the Inspector General to fight fraud, waste, and abuse, and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs and operations of MCPS and the Board of Education.
- ★ Implemented a digital solution to address the inefficiencies of conventional, paper-based procurement practices to a more streamlined digitized approach, which resulted in the complete virtualization of County contracting. The County's contracts and all related documentation (including inter-departmental communications, contracting actions, meeting minutes, and sourcing records) were printed and stored in folders and numerous file cabinets within Procurement. This method of managing contracts faced many challenges that were further magnified with the onset of the pandemic in 2020.
- ★ Initiated a monthly benefits newsletter for employees that contains important tips and information about their benefits.
- ★ The Office of Grants Management will manage a pool of flexible funding for grants pursuit and management tools that can be strategically allocated across departments to meet emerging, major opportunities and/or to be shared amongst smaller departments and offices who have infrequent grant opportunities. These specific grant training, search, pursuit, and leveraging tools are important resources for getting departments "Grants Ready" to attack grant opportunities as they arise or better manage awards received.
- ★ The Office of Grants Management will organize an internal "Grants Ready" conference for MCG employees who have a grants role in their department. The conference events will include, but not be limited to, federal grant writing and grant management best-practices led by outside experts as well as internally led trainings on County procurement strategies for grants, how to hire staff with grants experience, and key internal grants related processes.
- ★ Implemented the first phase of the web-based Contract Review Committee

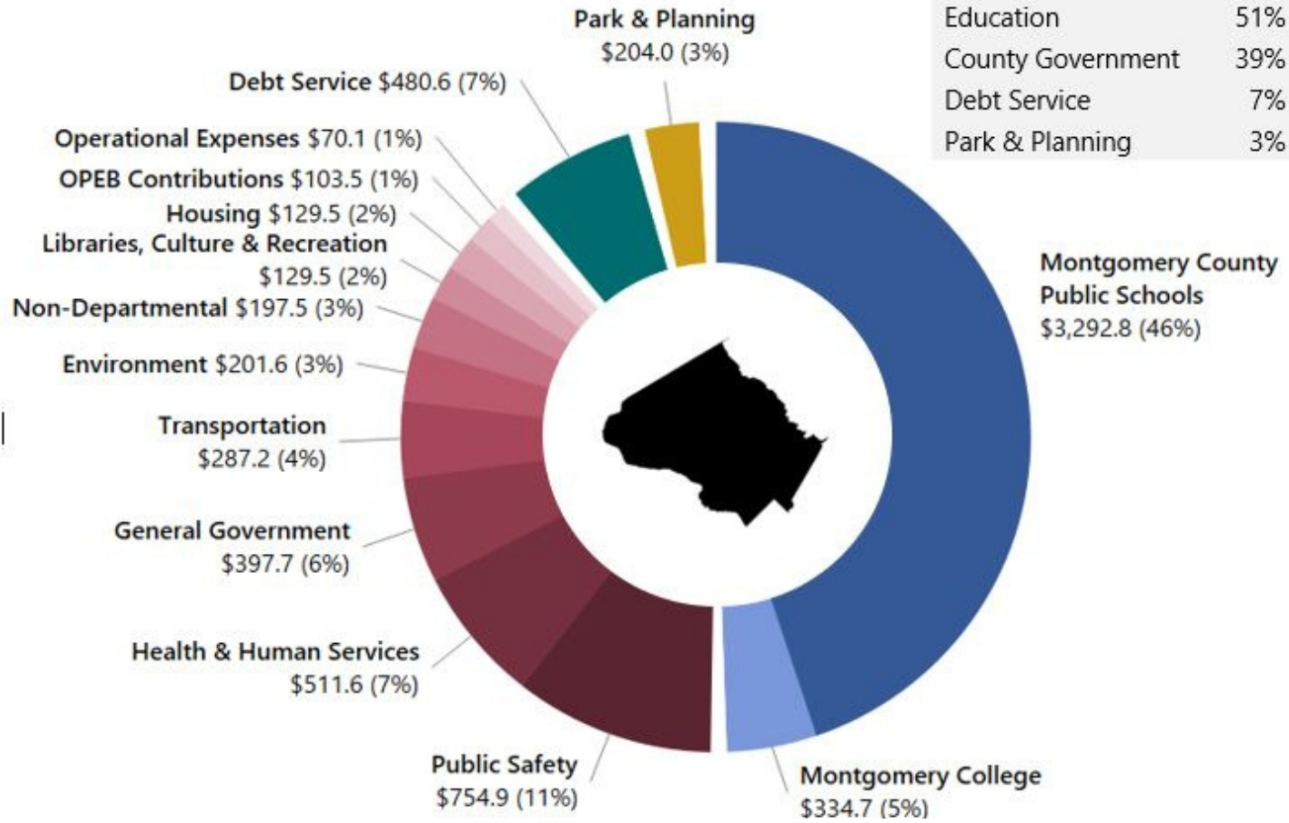
application to improve the efficiency of the overall process, and to maintain compliance with updates to the Open Meetings Act. Additional phases will further improve the process and include reporting features.

- ★ Launched a new website highlighting the services that OLR provides.
- ★ Initiating the construction of a large solar array and battery system at the Equipment, Maintenance, and Transit Operations Center (EMTOC) facility to produce solar energy and support green hydrogen production in support of the County initiative to move to a zero-emissions bus fleet.
- ★ Initiated an apprentice program in response to hiring challenges and the need to develop a workforce capable of supporting zero-emission technologies. After completing a two-year training program, successful apprentice technicians are capable of performing skilled maintenance work on the County's fleet of transit buses and heavy equipment. DFMS is also working with Montgomery College and the State of Maryland to develop a hiring pipeline and enhance the apprentice training experience.
- ★ Introduced a Program Inventory Initiative, a strategic effort to enhance performance management and accountability throughout our organization. This initiative aims to standardize the process of documentation, data collection, and evaluation of government services, thus enabling data-driven decision-making and evidence-based allocation of resources.
- ★ Continued to enhance outreach and training for Executive and Legislative staff liaisons, regarding the new Legislative Tracking System (Engagifii), to maximize opportunities for higher level collaboration and efficiency.
- ★ Continue leveraging automation software, business process reengineering, and developing customized software applications to meet the unique requirements of the department.
- ★ The Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH) division worked with DHHS Information Technology to implement additional updates to the online application system for COVID Rent Relief and emergency Rental Assistance Program (CRR and eRAP). FY24 updates included creating duplicate applications to support households with additional funds, updating the reporting capability to more easily respond to data requests, and enhancing data validation and alerts for required fields to improve the accuracy of the applications.

- ★ Recommend a total County budget from all sources for all County agencies of \$7,095,159,419 which is \$334.3 million or 4.9 percent more than the FY24 budget.
- ★ Recommend tax-supported funding for the Montgomery County Government of \$2,645,949,639 (including debt service and OPEB funding).
- ★ Recommend tax-supported funding for the Montgomery County Government of \$2,193,102,549 an increase of 8.6% percent (excluding debt service).
- ★ Funding for Montgomery County Public Schools will increase \$127.8 million or 4.0 percent. Within this total, the County contribution is \$132.8 million over maintenance of effort.
- ★ Funding for Montgomery College's FY25 Recommended Operating Budget totals \$334.7 million.
- ★ Recommend tax-supported funding for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) increases by \$10,754,228 or 6.3 percent from FY24 (including debt service and OPEB funding).
- ★ Fund the WSSC Water's FY25 operating and capital budgets with a 8.5 percent water and sewer rate increase in accordance with the Spending Affordability Guidelines adopted by Council.
- ★ Recommended a property tax rate of \$1.0255 per \$100 of assessed value and a \$692 homeowners' property tax credit. The weighted rate includes a \$0.047 tax rate that is authorized by Maryland Code, Education § 5-104 (d)(1). The recommended property tax rate is within the County's Charter limit.
- ★ Promote existing mechanisms for senior citizens and those on limited incomes to assist them as needed with property tax increases, such as the Senior Tax Credit program that benefits eligible residents who are at least 65 years of age. This credit is calculated as 50 percent of the combined State Homeowners' Tax Credit and County Supplement.
- ★ Retains the energy tax rate at the level approved by the Council for FY24, preserving an important stable and broad-based revenue source that includes Federal institutions that otherwise pay no taxes in exchange for County services.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

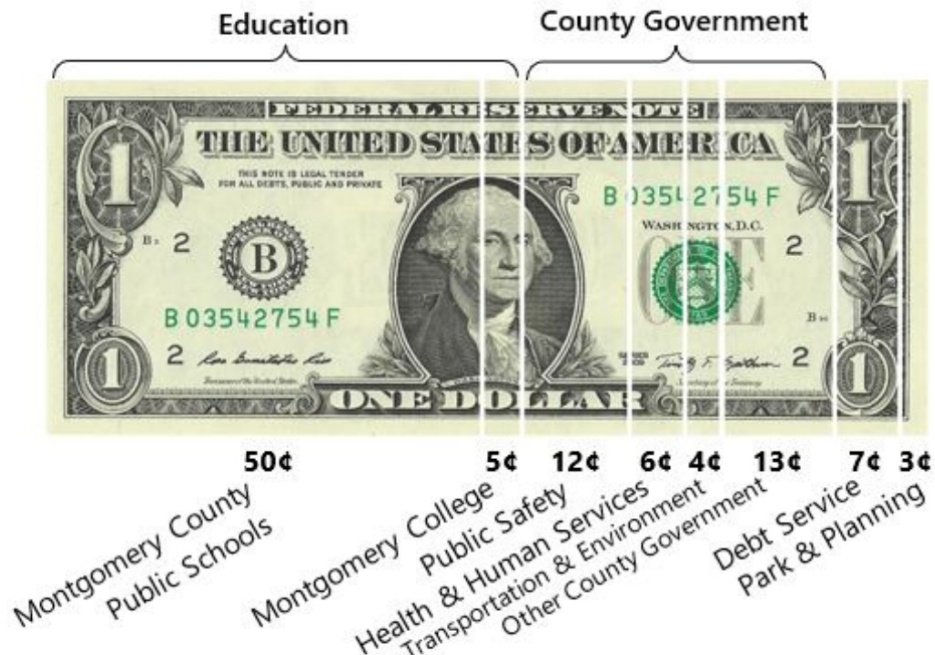
Expenditures by Function (millions)



Expenditure Categories

Education	51%
County Government	39%
Debt Service	7%
Park & Planning	3%

How a Dollar of Taxes is Spent



NOTE: Expenditures by Function chart includes funds from all sources; dollar bill chart includes only tax-supported funds.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

Revenues (millions)

