

Message from the Council President

The Council's approach to the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget was unlike any other. We had a singular goal – continuity of service. Like households across our community, we had to limit our spending and control budget growth. I am very pleased that we were able to meet our goal to provide for continuity of services for our residents because when we started our deliberations this seemed like an elusive target.



The County's budget holds the line on property taxes and continues the tradition of fiscal responsibility that has allowed us to maintain the County's AAA bond rating that is the hallmark of well-run governments, and we were also meeting the target for the County's reserves.

This year we funded \$2.76 billion for Montgomery County Public Schools. As the Council's focus was on providing a continuity of services budget, this amount funds MCPS at the Maintenance of Effort level, which is mandated by the State of Maryland.

Continuing the Council's commitment to helping children, families and individuals thrive, the budget includes level funding of \$5.99 million to support the Montgomery County Early Care and Education Initiative to expand quality early care and education opportunities for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

The Council funded a continuity of services budget of \$318.3 million for Montgomery College. County funding for the College is at the required Maintenance of Effort level. The College budget includes no increase in tuition rates or fees paid by students for FY21. The College's budget maximizes existing resources to protect affordable tuition and offer additional scholarships.

We also took steps to strengthen the County's economy during these difficult circumstances. The operating budget includes more than \$5 million to support the work of the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. The Council allocated \$1.3 million in funding for WorkSource Montgomery, which implements the County's workforce development policies to promote job growth and attract talent. The Council funded approximately \$3 million for the County's incubator programs. This includes funding for the Wheaton Small Business Technical Assistance Program. In addition, the budget includes \$1.6 million to fund Visit Montgomery which promotes and markets the County as a destination and provides information to County visitors.

The Council allocated more than \$61.8 million in capital and operating funds to support the production and preservation of affordable housing through the Housing Initiative Fund and reserved \$6.8 million to determine how the County can leverage additional funding sources and investments to accelerate the production and preservation of affordable housing.

I want to thank my Council colleagues and the Council staff for their hard work. Thank you also to the County Executive and his staff, and to the governing boards and staff of M-NCPPC, WSSC, MCPS and Montgomery College. Together we have produced a budget that is fiscally responsible, reflects the County's values and strengthens core government services that make our County an extraordinary place to live, work and raise a family.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sidney Katz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sidney Katz
President, Montgomery County Council