



Community Engagement Cluster

RECOMMENDED FY26 BUDGET

\$10,245,038

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

45.25



FARIBA KASSIRI, DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

MISSION STATEMENT

The Community Engagement Cluster (CEC) builds stronger, informed, and inclusive communities. The Cluster strengthens Montgomery County's commitment to civic engagement and community service by engaging residents, organizations, businesses, and other community groups. The Cluster maximizes communities' assets - time, talents, and other resources - working collaboratively to address and resolve community issues.




Established in 2011, the CEC is a combination of five Regional Services Centers, the Commission for Women, and the Office of Community Partnerships, which includes the Gilchrist Center, Volunteer Center, and Translations Unit, with each office/function having its own focus and expertise. The CEC receives administrative support from an internal business management team as well as from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total recommended FY26 Operating Budget for the Community Engagement Cluster is \$10,245,038, an increase of \$172,119 or 1.71 percent from the FY25 Approved Budget of \$10,072,919. Personnel Costs comprise 69.96 percent of the budget for 35 full-time position(s) and 21 part-time position(s), and a total of 45.25 FTEs. Total FTEs may include seasonal or temporary positions and may also reflect workforce charged to or from other departments or funds. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 30.04 percent of the FY26 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

While this program area supports all seven of the County Executive's Priority Outcomes, the following are emphasized:

-  **Thriving Youth and Families**
-  **An Affordable, Welcoming County for a Lifetime**
-  **Effective, Sustainable Government**

INITIATIVES

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- ★ Enhance engagement with multilingual communities through structured community forums and advisory group conversations, establishing regular two-way communication channels that elevate community input while creating streamlined pathways to connect vulnerable immigrant community members with vital legal, health, education, and economic resources in languages other than English.
 - ★ Strengthen the Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center's immigrant service referral system through the identification, verification, and cataloging of additional immigrant-serving organizations and resources, expanding access to comprehensive support services for immigrant communities throughout the County.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ★ The Office of Community Partnerships strengthened multilingual engagement through ongoing in-language community forums, including the Operating Budget forums in Chinese and Spanish with simultaneous interpretation to ensure broader participation and input from diverse linguistic communities.
- ★ The Translation Unit expanded its reach by completing translation requests from 25 County agencies in Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese, significantly increasing accessibility of government information and services for limited English proficient residents.
- ★ The Caribbean Community Liaison, in partnership with the East County Regional Service Office and other County and non-county government organizations, developed and implemented a comprehensive support system for the increased influx of migrants. Over the last 18 months, this collaborative effort delivered 25 resettlement workgroup conversations and 38 in-language community resource and engagement activities including: Community Group Learning English Classes, Legal Immigration Clinics, Workshops against Sexual Violence, Mental Health Screenings, Continuing Education resources, Workforce Development sessions, laptop distribution events, or food and clothing distribution events.
- ★ The Commission for Women provided leadership to the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee (HTPC). During 2024, the Committee trained members of the community about human trafficking, including members of the Montgomery County Public School system, fellow government entities, non-profit organizations, and supported local legislation that supported human trafficking victims.
- ★ The HTPC created and implemented an inaugural education and outreach campaign about human trafficking. Anti-trafficking information was placed on Ride On buses, recreation centers, and libraries, along with other prominent public areas.
- ★ The Commission for Women organized the 44th Annual Women's Legislative Briefing in January 2024, with over 500 participants. It was the first in-person briefing since the pandemic.
- ★ The Commission for Women provided 27 seminars to several hundred residents in 2024. The focus of the seminars is to enrich the lives of women and families by informing, educating, empowering, and supporting residents of the County.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Jacob Newman of the Community Engagement Cluster at 401-487-8996 or Eva Acevedo of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-777-2763 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below (where applicable), with multi-program measures displayed at the front of this section and program-specific measures shown with the relevant program. The FY25 estimates reflect funding based on the FY25 Approved Budget. The FY26 and FY27 figures are performance targets based on the FY26 Recommended Budget and funding for

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Administration

The Administration Unit of the Community Engagement Cluster oversees the daily operations, administrative functions, and policies related to various areas, including budget, procurement, financial management, contract/grant management, human resources, information technology, office space coordination, fleet management, and record management for the CEC offices and the four Urban Districts.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	1,024,856	5.00
Increase Cost: Three Percent Inflationary Adjustment to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts	30,120	0.00
Decrease Cost: Miscellaneous Operating Expenses	(53,268)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Lapse Adjustment	(157,342)	0.00
Shift: Transfer of Two Positions to OMB for Shared Services	(299,927)	(2.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	208,984	1.00
FY26 Recommended	753,423	4.00

Commission for Women

The Commission for Women's mission is to identify gender-based inequities in laws, policies, practices, and procedures, and to advocate remedies by advising the public and local, state, and federal agencies on issues of concern to women, including organizing events relating to these issues. In addition, the Commission is responsible for providing support, guidance, and leadership to the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to reduce and prevent human trafficking in Montgomery County by increasing understanding of the issue and developing interagency coordination of strategies for response and prevention.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	406,770	2.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	25,978	0.00
FY26 Recommended	432,748	2.00

Community Partnership

The Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) is a bridge builder between the County's diverse communities and County government. Due to OCP's deep reach into communities, OCP worked closely with the Regional Directors to lead the County's 2020 Census Campaign. "Everyone Counts in Montgomery County" was a multifaceted campaign targeted toward historically undercounted communities (communities of color, multilingual and LGBTQ communities, children under 5, and seniors) and specific census tracts. Strategies included developing materials in the top six spoken languages in the county (Spanish, Chinese, Korean, French, Amharic, and Vietnamese), creating multilingual and multicultural media, use of social media, and collaborating

with nonprofit partners. OCP realized there was significant overlap between targeted communities/census tracts and communities most impacted by COVID-19, and therefore tied COVID information (rental assistance, food resources, etc.) to Census outreach. As a result of Montgomery County's successful 2020 Census campaign efforts, OCP will continue to take the lead on the County's multilingual and multicultural communication outreach efforts.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	4,996,478	21.75
Increase Cost: Restore One-Time Lapse Increase	183,855	0.00
Technical Adj: Realign Personnel Costs from General Fund to Grant Fund	74,604	0.50
Technical Adj: Realign Personnel Costs from General Fund to Grant Fund	(74,604)	(0.50)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	125,423	(0.50)
FY26 Recommended	5,305,756	21.25

Gilchrist Center

The Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity is the County's Welcome Center for newcomers and builds the network of immigrant service providers in the County. The Center offers various immigrant integration services at multiple locations throughout the County that prepare residents to contribute to our economy and our community.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	892,854	7.50
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(11,864)	(0.50)
FY26 Recommended	880,990	7.00

Regional Services Centers

The County has five Regional Services Centers: Bethesda-Chevy Chase, East County, Mid-County, Silver Spring, and Upcounty. The Regional Directors in each of the County's five regions work with their respective regional citizens advisory boards, residents, community groups, businesses, and other public agencies to proactively seek and gather information and assess community needs, problems, and issues in order to provide effective and timely input representing their regions in policy discussions and collaborations with departments on service offerings and delivery systems. The Regional Directors of the Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Bethesda/Chevy Chase regions provide oversight of the operations of their respective Urban Districts.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	2,751,961	11.00
Decrease Cost: Miscellaneous Operating Expenses	(50,000)	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	170,160	0.00
FY26 Recommended	2,872,121	11.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY24	Budget FY25	Estimate FY25	Recommended FY26	%Chg Bud/Rec
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BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY24	Budget FY25	Estimate FY25	Recommended FY26	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	4,862,518	5,256,448	5,046,669	5,310,290	1.0 %
Employee Benefits	1,360,543	1,612,610	1,464,340	1,712,738	6.2 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	6,223,061	6,869,058	6,511,009	7,023,028	2.2 %
Operating Expenses	2,175,138	3,128,861	3,299,637	3,066,600	-2.0 %
Capital Outlay	35	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Expenditures	8,398,234	9,997,919	9,810,646	10,089,628	0.9 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	35	36	36	34	-5.6 %
Part-Time	21	21	21	21	—
FTEs	45.75	46.75	46.75	44.25	-5.4 %
REVENUES					
Commission for Women Fees	1,763	0	0	0	—
Facility Rental Fees	6,445	10,500	10,500	10,500	—
Miscellaneous Revenues	40	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Revenues	8,248	10,500	10,500	10,500	—
GRANT FUND - MCG					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	72,741	49,156	49,156	109,653	123.1 %
Employee Benefits	21,207	15,231	15,231	35,144	130.7 %
Grant Fund - MCG Personnel Costs	93,948	64,387	64,387	144,797	124.9 %
Operating Expenses	199,752	10,613	10,613	10,613	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	293,700	75,000	75,000	155,410	107.2 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	1	1	1	1	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.00	100.0 %
REVENUES					
Federal Grants	226,503	75,000	75,000	155,410	107.2 %
State Grants	54,600	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	281,103	75,000	75,000	155,410	107.2 %
DEPARTMENT TOTALS					
Total Expenditures	8,691,934	10,072,919	9,885,646	10,245,038	1.7 %
Total Full-Time Positions	36	37	37	35	-5.4 %
Total Part-Time Positions	21	21	21	21	—
Total FTEs	46.25	47.25	47.25	45.25	-4.2 %

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY24	Budget FY25	Estimate FY25	Recommended FY26	%Chg Bud/Rec
Total Revenues	289,351	85,500	85,500	165,910	94.0 %

FY26 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY25 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	9,997,919	46.75
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: FY26 Compensation Adjustment	298,088	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore One-Time Lapse Increase [Community Partnership]	183,855	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY25 Compensation Increases	145,062	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY25 Personnel Costs	42,206	0.00
Increase Cost: Three Percent Inflationary Adjustment to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts [Administration]	30,120	0.00
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	16,632	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	7,722	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	3,165	0.00
Decrease Cost: Miscellaneous Operating Expenses [Regional Services Centers]	(50,000)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Miscellaneous Operating Expenses [Administration]	(53,268)	0.00
Technical Adj: Realign Personnel Costs from General Fund to Grant Fund [Community Partnership]	(74,604)	(0.50)
Decrease Cost: Lapse Adjustment [Administration]	(157,342)	0.00
Shift: Transfer of Two Positions to OMB for Shared Services [Administration]	(299,927)	(2.00)
FY26 RECOMMENDED	10,089,628	44.25

GRANT FUND - MCG

FY25 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	75,000	0.50
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Technical Adj: Realign Personnel Costs from General Fund to Grant Fund [Community Partnership]	74,604	0.50
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY25 Personnel Costs	5,806	0.00
FY26 RECOMMENDED	155,410	1.00

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs	FY26 REC Expenditures	FY26 REC FTEs
Administration	1,024,856	5.00	753,423	4.00
Commission for Women	406,770	2.00	432,748	2.00
Community Partnership	4,996,478	21.75	5,305,756	21.25

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs	FY26 REC Expenditures	FY26 REC FTEs
Gilchrist Center	892,854	7.50	880,990	7.00
Regional Services Centers	2,751,961	11.00	2,872,121	11.00
Total	10,072,919	47.25	10,245,038	45.25

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY26 Recommended	10,090	10,090	10,090	10,090	10,090	10,090
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Labor Contracts	0	69	69	69	69	69
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	10,090	10,159	10,159	10,159	10,159	10,159

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