



Happy Holidays!

Amidst the holiday season - we wish you, and your family, health and happiness.

Montgomery County

January Forums for Public Input on FY17 Montgomery County Operating Budget

The County Executive released the times and places of five budget forums to be held throughout the County in January 2016. Budget forums are held every year to get public feedback on the upcoming County operating budget. They are free and open to all. The County Executive will release his Recommended Operating Budget on March 15, 2016, for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2016. All the meetings begin at 7 PM (See Events Section below for dates and locations.)

The forums begin with a briefing on the upcoming budget by the County Office of Management and Budget, followed by an opportunity for public comment/questions.

Commission on Common Ownership Communities

Based on a previously released Office of Legislative Oversight report, the County is proposing moving the Commission on Common Ownership Communities from The Office of Consumer Protection to The Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Bill 50-15 would also change the composition of the Commission, and some of the regulations around mediation. A public hearing is scheduled before the County Council on January 12th at 1:30 pm. Those wishing to testify can sign up at 240-777-7803.

Sector Plans in Process

Montgomery County Planning Board & Department, and the County Council are currently working through a number of sector plans. The final draft of the Westbard Sector Plan has been transmitted from the Planning Board to the County Council, with a public hearing tentatively scheduled for January 26th. The Westbard Sector Plan includes a focus on

housing which is affordable at a range of incomes, and leveraging County owned properties.

The Planning Department continues to work through the White Flint 2, and Bethesda Downtown Sector Plans. They have also approved a draft plan for Lyttonsville, with a public hearing scheduled for February 11, 2016.

State of Maryland

2016 Legislative Session Starts January 13th

The Maryland Legislature will begin its 90-day session on Wednesday, January 13th. Already, there are over 2,000 bills in the pre-filing queue. The session is scheduled to go through April 11th. Hearings and Sessions are open to the public. Schedules are viewable on the Legislature's website.

Senator Montgomery Set to Retire

On December 4, State Senator and District 14 member Karen Montgomery announced that she will submit her resignation to Senate President Miller in January. She will continue to serve District 14, and will only retire upon the appointment of her successor.

Legislation to Watch Out For

In partnership with The Community Development Network of Maryland, MHP has been working on a number of potential bills, leading up to the 2016 session. We anticipate bills being introduced to: double the Community Investment Tax Credit Program from \$1.75 million to \$3.5 million; amend the Maryland Condominium Act to clarify voting is by those in good standing; and establish a Community Development Fund.

Federal

Congress Approves an Omnibus Budget Deal for FY16

On Dec. 18th, Congress approved a 2016 spending bill, which President Obama subsequently signed into law. As it relates to housing and community development:

- National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) program remained intact (The House's original spending bill would have raided 100% of the NHTF's funds in 2016 and used them to fund the HOME program. The Senate Committee bill did not raid the NHTF program.)
- HOME– Small increase of \$50 million above FY15 level to \$950M for FY16 (the House bill would have cut HOME to \$767 million in FY16; the Senate bill would have effectively eliminated funding for the HOME program by cutting it to \$66 million in FY16.)
- Homeless Assistance Grants – Increase over FY15's \$2.135B to \$2.250B.
- Public Housing Operating and Capital Funds – Small increases for both
- Community Development Block Grants, granting allocation - \$3.06 billion

Additional details, and year-to-year comparisons can be viewed through the National Low-Income Housing Coalition's website.

Congress Acts on Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Rate

Also on Dec. 18 Congress passed legislation to extend numerous tax provisions and tax credits. This included making permanent the minimum 9 percent Low-Income Housing Tax Credit in the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015.

While technical in nature, the permanent minimum 9 percent rate will significantly strengthen the Housing Credit by simplifying program administration, providing predictability, and allowing states to allocate more Housing Credit equity into individual developments when needed for financial feasibility.

Upcoming Events

January

6 (Wednesday) – 7 pm - Executive FY17 Budget Forum, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, 3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring

11 (Monday) – 7 pm - Executive FY17 Budget Forum, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda

12 (Tuesday) - 1:30 pm - County Council Public Hearing on Bill 50-15

14 (Thursday) 8:30 am - Nonprofit Montgomery: Changes in Workforce Development and DED: Implications for Nonprofits - 12320 Parklawn Dr. Rockville, MD 20852

20 (Wednesday) – 7 pm - Executive FY17 Budget Forum, Silver Spring Civic Center, One Veterans Plaza, Silver Spring

20 (Wednesday) 6 pm - Montgomery Planning Department Winter Speaker Series: Nat Bottigheimer: Putting the Transition Back in Transit

21 (Thursday) – 7 pm - Executive FY17 Budget Forum, Mid-County Community Recreation Center, 2004 Queensguard Road, Silver Spring

25 (Monday) – 7 pm - Executive FY17 Budget Forum, BlackRock Center for the Arts, 12901 Town Commons Drive, Germantown

February

3 (Wednesday) 10:30 am - Community Development Network Legislative Luncheon, Lowe House Office Building, 6 Bladen St, Annapolis, MD

16 (Tuesday) 6 pm - Montgomery Planning Department Winter Speaker Series: Jennifer Toole: Recent approaches to suburban bicycle planning

March

16 (Wednesday) 6 pm - Montgomery Planning Department Winter Speaker Series: Jeffrey Tumlin: Smart development in transitional suburban locations

Please visit our website at www.mhpartners.org
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