



Howard County

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Complete Streets Policy – Implementation Update

To: Howard County Council

From: Clarence Dickerson, Administrator, Office of Transportation

Date: September 23, 2025

On October 7, 2019, Howard County Council passed Council Resolution 120-2019, adopting a Complete Streets Policy for the County. The policy specifies several implementation activities, as well as semi-annual reporting to County Council to describe progress. This memorandum is the ninth of those reports. The County Administration, Office of Transportation (OOT), Department of Public Works (DPW), and Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) are pleased to report that significant implementation progress has been made in the 54 months since the policy was adopted.

Review of the past twelve months

Neighborhood Traffic Calming Policy

DPW made a substantial update to their neighborhood traffic calming policy in October 2024. The new policy aligns with the Howard County Complete Streets policy, providing residents with a simple, convenient process for requesting traffic calming and outlining a consistent process for DPW to evaluate requests from the public, prioritize improvements and select appropriate measures from the Complete Streets Design Manual. More details on the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Policy can be found here:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/public-works/traffic-calming>

Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)

In August 2024, the Department of Planning and Zoning convened an Adequate Public Facilities Act Review Committee that met twenty-three times over a twelve-month period. OOT provided additional staff support to the committee. The committee prepared twenty-three recommendations on the County's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) which governs the timing and pace of development to ensure public infrastructure and service, including roads, schools, parks, and public safety services align with growth.

More details on the APFO Review Committee and the report can be found here:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/boards-commissions/adequate-public-facilities-ordinance-review-committee>.

Public engagement undertaken

The list below describes public engagement relating to Complete Streets projects undertaken between July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025.

- Dorchester Way Traffic Calming Project, June 24, 2025

- Flash Bus Project, May 16, 2025
- Flash Bus Project, May 31, 2025
- Montgomery Road Complete Streets Feasibility Study, May 22, 2025
- Phelps Luck Drive and High Tor Hill Traffic Calming Project, May 20, 2025
- Complete Streets Improvements to Kings Contrivance Roadways,
- Dorchester Way Traffic Calming Project, April 30, 2025
- Furnace Avenue and Hanover Road Traffic Calming Project, April 23, 2025
- Improvements to Tamar Drive, Phelps Luck Drive and High Tor Hill, February 27, 2025
- Annual Transportation Open House, January 30, 2025
- North Laurel Sidewalk Project, January 27, 2025
- Furnace Avenue and Hanover Road Traffic Calming Project. October 29, 2024
- Gorman Road/Skylark Boulevard Roundabout Project, October 22, 2024
- Thunder Hill Road Bike Lanes, October 17, 2024
- Elkridge Transportation Projects, September 25, 2024
- Old Scaggsville Road Complete Streets Feasibility Study, September 10, 2024
- Flash Bus Project, September 23, 2024
- Guilford Road Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Project, July 11, 2024

Complete Streets Capital Projects and Bike Lane Implementation Through Road Resurfacing

These projects were completed between July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025:

- Montgomery Road between Steepridge Drive and Lawyers Hill Court. New sidewalk, crosswalk with pedestrian refuge island and bike lane were added in September 2024. This is phase two of the Montgomery Road Complete Streets project.
- Columbia Road between MD175 and MD108. Shoulders converted to protected bike lanes in October 2024.
- Sanner Road from Johns Hopkins Road to Pindell School Road. Bike lanes were added to segments of Sanner Road at the time of resurfacing in October 2024.
- Johns Hopkins Road from Sanner Road to Pindell School Road. Bike lanes were added at the time of resurfacing in November 2024.
- Thunder Hill Road from MD175 to Sohap Road. Buffered bike lanes were added in August 2025.
- Bike Wayfinding. Installation of first route (Indigo) was completed in May 2025 in Hickory Ridge, Wilde Lake and Downtown Columbia. Additional bike wayfinding routes will follow in 2026.

Complete Streets Planning and Prioritization

The Active Transportation Open House and Howard County Transportation Priority Letter meetings are held annually, providing opportunities for the public to comment and provide feedback on transportation projects and issues around the county. In 2025, over 100 people attended the Active Transportation Open House / Priority Letter meeting.

OOT is also working to enhance communication with the public on how to stay involved and informed throughout the year. This effort includes:

- Social media, project websites, Constant Contact lists, email, mail, and phone.
- Advisory groups. There are two advisory groups that work with the OOT: the Multimodal Transportation Board (MTB) and the Bicycle Advisory Group (BAG). A member of the public can request to make “public comment” and speak at one of the meetings. Meeting information is posted on the [MTB webpage](#) and [BAG webpage](#). Email transportation@howardcountymd.gov to request to make comments or simply attend and listen.
- Projects and events. The OOT appreciates input on planning projects in different phases and at special events. Project websites are used to post upcoming meeting,
- Reports and surveys. Community members can email transportation@howardcountymd.gov to request information about specific projects or view the calendar to identify upcoming project public meetings.
- County Council. The public can contact their County Council member with any concerns about the transportation network.
- TellHoCo. [TellHoCo](#) is a tool to notify the County know when there is a problem with damaged roads, sidewalks, or signage; or if debris or fallen trees causing unsafe conditions. Complaints will be directed to the correct department.
- WalkHoward and BikeHoward websites. Online forms on the WalkHoward and BikeHoward websites are available. They are located here: [WalkHoward form](#) and [BikeHoward form](#).
- Websites. The Office of Transportation websites, including WalkHoward.org, BikeHoward.org, and GoHoward.org have been created to provide the public with current, relevant, and comprehensive information.

Developer Submissions of Multimodal Transportation Studies

The 2022 update to the Design Manual includes a new requirement for development projects to provide a multimodal transportation study with the development submissions. This study evaluates existing pedestrian and bicycle connections to likely destinations near the development such as schools and parks and provides guidance of potential future infrastructure changes to improve the connections when needed. Since this requirement started on July 1, 2022, 61 projects have submitted multimodal transportation studies with 22 of them being received by the Office of Transportation between July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025. Projects that are projected to generate fewer than 5 peak hour trips are not required to provide a multimodal transportation study.

Exceptions for Capital Projects

The process for reviewing potential exceptions to the Complete Streets Design Manual includes:

1. Public notice, including a description of the project and the reason for the exception, shall be given through the Office of Transportation website.
2. Opportunity for advisory opinion by The Multimodal Transportation Board (MTB).
3. Unanimous approval by the Director of Public Works, the Director of Planning and Zoning, and the Administrator of the Office of Transportation or their designees.

There were no complete streets exceptions for capital projects between July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025.

Exceptions for Developer Projects

During the period from July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025, the following Design Manual exceptions for developer projects were reviewed and processed. The table shows exceptions related to the provision of frontage improvements and/or material revisions to design standards for transportation facilities. Design exceptions for non-transportation design standards and/or non-material deviations are not included in this list.

Project Name	Exception Type	Action Taken	Comment
6970 Linden Ave	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Montgomery Patel Property	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Dewani Residence	Design Manual	Approved	Exemption from speed study requirement. Neighborhood lacks traffic requirement to generate applicable speed data.
Viking Residential Services	Design Manual	Approved	Requested exception from Complete Streets street type standards due to unique land use characteristics of this development.
4521 Ten Oaks Road/Khan Property	Design Manual	Approved	Requested exception from Complete Streets street type standards due to unique land use characteristics of this development.
10437 Clarksville Pike	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Wolfe Property	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Holy Korean Martyrs Catholic Church	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
River Hill Estates	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Mitchell Greens	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Cattail Chase Overlook	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Holiday Hills - Lot 56	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
November Holdings	Design Manual	Approved	Fee-in-lieu provided to fund multimodal improvements in the development's planning area.
Asher Property	Design Manual	Approved	Request to limit shoulder improvements to a portion of the total frontage due to environmental conflicts, including forest conservation easement.

Performance Measures

According to the Complete Streets policy, “performance measures shall be used to track Complete Streets implementation progress, prioritize projects, and evaluate designs.” The policy specifies thirteen performance measures that are required to be reported on annually.

1. Safety/Public Health: Number and location of fatalities by road type and mode of travel, and by age and gender as data are available

The OOT reviews and compiles crash report data provided by the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration’s Highway Safety Office and the Howard County Police Department. Fatal crashes are listed by road type (Interstate/US Routes, State Routes, or County routes). Fatalities are listed by mode of travel (drivers, passengers, pedestrians), age, and gender.

Additional information is published annually in the Howard County [Strategic Road Safety Plan](#).

2. Safety/Public Health: Number and location of serious injuries by road type and mode of travel, and by age and gender as data are available

The OOT reviews and compiles crash report data provided by the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration’s Highway Safety Office and the Howard County Police Department. Serious injuries are defined using the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 4th Edition “*Suspected Serious Injury (A)*” attribute found in the “*Injury Status*” element. The Federal Highway Administration publishes a [fact sheet](#) explaining the definition in more detail. Serious injury crashes are listed by road type (Interstate/US Routes, State Routes, or County Routes). Serious injuries are listed by mode of travel (Drivers, Passengers, or Pedestrians), age, and gender. Additional information is published annually in the Howard County [Strategic Road Safety Plan](#).

3. Access: Miles of sidewalk, trail, and bicycle infrastructure installed or repaired

The OOT coordinates with DPW’s Transportation and Special Projects Division and Bureau of Highways to track the miles of sidewalk, trail, and bicycle infrastructure installed or repaired annually as part of Capital Projects.

4. Access: Number of curb ramps installed or repaired

DPW’s Bureau of Highways oversees all curb ramps currently in place and tracks repairs. DPW’s Transportation and Special Projects Division oversees the construction of new ramps as part of Capital Projects.

5. Access: Number of crosswalks installed or repaired

Crosswalks are installed and repaired as part of road resurfacing projects. Repairs to crosswalks completed outside of the resurfacing program are handled by DPW’s Traffic Engineering Division.

6. Access: Number of transit stops with sidewalk access installed or repaired

The OOT coordinates with the Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland (RTA) to

track the number of transit stops with sidewalk access installed or repaired annually as part of Capital Projects.

7. Access: Percentage of transit stops with marked crosswalks within 150 feet

Bus stop data results were achieved through a spatial analysis to select all RTA and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) bus stops within 150 feet of a crosswalk.

Because of a lack of crosswalk data for state roads, a second analysis was required to determine which of the remaining bus stop features were within 150 feet of a crosswalk on a state road. With this narrower set of data, it was possible to view each state road bus stop on Google Street View to determine if there was a crosswalk nearby.

8. Access: Percent of Bike Howard short term network completed

The OOT tracks the status of projects included in the BikeHoward short term network. The percentage completed is based on the number of miles of the short term network completed divided by the 80 miles that comprise the short term network.

9. Access: Percent of Walk Howard network completed

The OOT tracks the status of the structured projects listed in WalkHoward. The percentage completed is based on the number of projects completed divided by 43, the total number of structured projects.

10. Access: Percent of the population with direct access to a low-stress bike network

Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) is a quantitative methodology used to rate road segments and crossings for bikeability that correlates to “[types of bicyclists](#).” The original LTS methodology was published in the paper [Low- Stress Bicycling and Network Connectivity](#) by Maaza C. Mekuria, PhD, PE, PTOE; Peter G. Furth, PhD; and Hilary Nixon, PhD. LTS levels are defined from low- to high-stress, where LTS 1 represents a facility that is suitable for children and LTS 4 represents a facility only suitable for riders classified as “strong and fearless.”

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is developing statewide LTS data that can be used by Maryland counties and municipalities to use for network analysis and project planning. Once published, this data will be maintained by and updated regularly by MDOT. **This performance measure cannot be calculated until MDOT makes this data available for use by the County.** Once the LTS data is available, the following steps will be taken to determine the percent of the population with direct access to a low- stress bike network:

- Define low-stress
- Identify low-stress islands
- Define “direct access”
- Define “low-stress bike network”
- Calculate percent of population with access

The percentage of households with access to the low-stress bike network will be calculated annually for use in this report, but LTS data will also be valuable for use in project planning and prioritization.

11. Access/Place: Connections to important destinations, including schools, libraries, parks,

community centers, village centers, social service centers, significant health care facilities, and government centers

Determining connections to important destinations requires accurate and up-to-date GIS data including:

- Routable LTS data (to be provided by MDOT, see performance measure 10)
- Routable sidewalk data (to be developed by Howard County)
- Routable pathway data (to be developed by Howard County)
- Point files for the above listed destinations (to be refined by Howard County)
- County parcel data

A walkshed and bikeshed analysis will be conducted for each destination type. A walkshed or bikeshed is defined as the area around a destination that is considered walkable or bikeable for a typical person. This is often considered to be a ten-minute/half-mile walk and a 12-minute/3-mile bike ride.

A basic version of this analysis could be done by applying a half-mile or 1.5-mile radius around the destination, and residential parcels within that buffer were considered to be walkable or bikeable to the destination in question.

However, this methodology ignores whether or not there is an accessible walking or biking route between someone's home and their destination, as well as geographic constraints that might block access.

Using routable GIS data for LTS, pathways, and sidewalks, it is possible to calculate a much more accurate walkshed and bikeshed for each identified destination. The walkshed analysis will require routable sidewalk and pathway data. The bikeshed analysis will require routable LTS data and pathway data (only low-stress streets would be used in the bikeshed analysis). The County is waiting to receive the routable LTS data from MDOT. The County's current sidewalk and pathway data is not routable. The OOT is exploring options to refine the sidewalk and pathway data so that it can be used in this analysis. **This performance measure cannot be completed until routable GIS data is developed.**

Once walkshed and bikeshed analyses are completed for each destination type, it will be possible to see how many residential parcels or households are within that area. The performance measure included in this report will be the percentage of County households within walking or biking distance of each destination type.

12. Access/Economy: Connections to employment centers

MDOT Maryland Transit Administration developed an "Employment Destination Index" for the Regional Transit Plan for Central Maryland that will be used in this analysis. The methodology used to determine the percent of households connected to employment centers will be similar to what is described for performance measure 11.

13. Equity: Percentage of new roadway projects or roadway repairs in priority communities

Howard County uses Equity Emphasis Areas, a method developed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) which is compliant with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental

Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations.” BMC calls their methodology the Vulnerable Population Index.

The Equity Emphasis Areas uses U.S. Census Bureau data to measure the percentages of the following population groups in each census tract:

- Poverty
- Non-Hispanic, Non-White
- Hispanic
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Disabled
- Elderly
- Carless

This data is used to measure the degree to which each census tract is vulnerable. More information on the methodology used is described in [the Equity Emphasis Area \(formerly Vulnerable Population Index\) background and explanation document](#).

The number of projects or repairs located in vulnerable census tracts are divided by the total number of projects and repairs completed countywide to produce the percentage of new roadway projects or roadway repairs in priority communities.

HOWARD COUNTY METRICS PER COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

	CATEGORY	TRANSPORTATION SAFETY METRIC (a)	CALENDAR YEAR (b)				
			2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1	Safety/ Public Health	Number and location of fatalities					
		• Crashes by road type					
		○ Interstate/US Routes	11	13	16	12	14
		○ State Routes	7	6	7	11	4
		○ County Routes	8	12	6	6	4
		TOTAL fatal crashes	26	31	29	29	22
		• Fatalities by mode of travel					
		○ Drivers	19	21	18	19	15
		○ Passengers	4	1	5	2	0
		○ Pedestrians and Bicyclists	6	11	6	7	8
		• Fatalities by age	*1 incident does not have age				
		○ 19 and under	5	1	3	0	0
		○ 20-34	9	10	8	8	7
		○ 35-49	8	12	3	10	6
		○ 50-64	6	8	9	4	6
		○ 65-79	0	2	6	2	3
		○ 80+	1	0	0	4	1
		• Fatalities by gender					
		○ Male	25	27	21	21	15
		○ Female	4	6	8	7	8
		TOTAL fatalities	29	33	29	28	23
2	Safety/ Public Health	Number & location of serious injuries					
		• Crashes by road type					
		○ Interstate/US Routes	28	47	43	32	40
		○ State Routes	19	22	25	19	14
		○ County Routes	29	41	35	39	44
		TOTAL serious injury crashes	76	110	103	90	98
		• Serious injury by mode of travel					
		○ Drivers	58	93	77	68	78
		○ Passengers	15	16	16	18	22
		○ Pedestrians and Bicyclists	12	16	19	16	14
		• Serious injury by age					
		○ 19 and under	10	10	13	15	24
		○ 20-34	27	45	41	33	40
		• 35-49	18	31	28	26	25
		• 50-64	25	24	23	19	16
		• 65-79	4	12	6	8	5
		• 80+	1	3	1	1	3
		Unknown Age					1
		• Serious injuries by gender					
		○ Male	58	90	82	68	71
		○ Female	27	34	30	34	41
		TOTAL serious injuries	85	125	112	102	114

HOWARD COUNTY PERFORMANCE MEASURES PER COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

	CATEGORY	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	FISCAL YEAR 2021	FISCAL YEAR 2022	FISCAL YEAR 2023	FISCAL YEAR 2024	FISCAL YEAR 2025
3	Access	Miles of sidewalk, trail, and bicycle infrastructure installed or repaired	14	15.9	12	16	13
4	Access	Number of curb ramps installed or <i>repaired (For FY 2021, curbs repaired under the resurfacing program are included)</i>	191	344	300	326	325
5	Access	Number of crosswalks installed or repaired <i>(For FY 2021, crosswalks repaired under the resurfacing program are included)</i>	76	57	53	126	25
6	Access	Number of transit stops with sidewalk access installed or repaired, percent of total stops with access					
		• RTA	10; 78%	0; 78%	14; 80%	10; 82%	NA
7	Access	Percentage of transit stops with marked crosswalks within 150 feet					
		• MTA	34%	34%	35%	37%	NA
		• RTA	38%	38%	39%	35%	NA
8	Access	Percent of Bike Howard short term network completed	49%	52%	55%	60%	62%
9	Access	Percent of Walk Howard structured projects completed	7%	12%	16%	19%	22%
10(c)	Access	Percent of the population with direct access to a low-stress bike network	-	-			
11(c)	Access/ Place	Connections to important destinations include:					
		• Schools	-	-	-		
		• Libraries	-	-	-		
		• Parks	-	-	-		
		• Community centers	-	-	-		
		• Village centers	-	-	-		
		• Social service centers	-	-	-		
		• Significant health care facilities	-	-	-		
		• Government centers	-	-	-		
12(c)	Access/ Economy	Connections to employment centers	-	-	-		
13	Equity	Percentage of new roadway projects or roadway repairs in priority communities <i>(For FY21, and FY22 repairs under the resurfacing program are included)</i>	50%	40%	37%	37%	37%

- (a) The numbers of fatalities and serious injuries will always have a lot of variability from year to year when there is such a small sample size. This is one of the reasons why safety data are looked at on a larger scale at the statewide level.
- (b) The safety data requires validation so there may be a delay in reporting.
- (c) Data for measures 10-12 will not be available until a State LTS and routable networks are available.

Additional Measures

- **Journey to work by mode** - for workers aged 16 years or older.

Journey to work by mode	2010-2014	2015-2019	2019-2023*
Drove	88.42%	87.99%	72.8%
Public transit	3.80%	3.57%	1.9%
Bicycle	0.16%	0.09%	0.1%
Walk	1.14%	1.00%	0.9%
Work from home	5.78%	6.24%	23.2%
Other	0.57%	0.80%	1.2%
Source: Census			
*2023 is the most recent Census dataset, providing a 5-year estimate for 2019-2023. Therefore, 2019 is included in two columns.			

- **Percentage of urban/suburban roadway mileage with partial sidewalks on one or both sides**

Only roadways within the Planned Service Area (PSA) were included in this analysis. Current plans call for another update at the end of CY 2027 (once every five years).

Sidewalks	2017	2022
Percent sidewalks	72%	74.8%
Source: OOT		

The percentage of urban/suburban roadway mileage, excluding interstates and freeways, with sidewalks on one or both sides was calculated by establishing a 50-foot catchment zone from the existing sidewalk network in the planned service area. However, due to limitations with the data, this measure will likely change.

These limitations are:

- Some roadways that do not have sidewalk frontage for their full extent are captured in the calculation.
- Some roadways without sidewalk frontage are captured in the calculation due to how the catchment zones extend from the terminus of a sidewalk segment.

- **Transit ridership**

This measure represents the number of one-way trips (total count of individual boardings) on local and regional routes. The Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) delivers public transit in Anne Arundel County, Howard County, northern Prince George's County, and the City of Laurel to provide an alternative to the private automobile in accessing jobs, medical services, recreation, and shopping, and reducing congestion and air pollution. The number of one-way trips does not include trips for local routes in Anne Arundel County, northern Prince George's County, and the City of Laurel.

RTA Passenger Boardings	FY18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Number	810,000	853,027	581,582*	279,207*	603,074	711,570	880,806	940,521
Source: RTA	* Significantly reduced ridership in FY 20 and FY 21 was the result of a combination of decreased demand and reduced service levels as a result of the global pandemic.							

- **Number (or percentage) of students within the recognized Howard County Public School walk zones (safe walk or bike route to school within the minimum distance set by HCPSS)**

This data is provided based on the school year. During the 2022/2023 school year, 15,273 students were within walk zones and not eligible for bus transportation services out of 58,795 total students.

Students within HCPSS Walk Zone	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Total students	55,147	54,154	58,354	58,795	59,738	60,449
Eligible School Bus Riders	42,487	41,328	43,022	43,522	42,772	41,574
Walkers	12,660	12,826	15,332	15,273	16,966	16,519
Percent Walkers	23.0	23.5	26.3	26.0	28.0	27.3%
Source: HCPSS						

Progress anticipated during the next twelve months

Maintenance of Traffic for All Modes Guidance: The Office of Transportation (OOT) and the Department of Public Works (DPW) will continue to develop resources to improve the maintenance of traffic for pedestrians and cyclists during construction and maintenance work by County staff, County contractors, and private contractors.

Update of Bicycle Master Plan: The BikeHoward Plan will be updated, starting in the fall of 2025 and moving towards adoption in the spring of 2026. This will include comprehensive public outreach and input.

Implementation of Complete Streets Projects: Major complete streets projects are moving towards construction in the next year including:

- Tamar Drive (lane reconfiguration, bike lanes, pedestrian crossing improvements from MD 175 to Snowden River Parkway)
- Dobbin Road (shared use pathway and pedestrian crossing improvements from Oakland Mills Road to MD 175)
- Rogers Avenue (bike lanes, sidewalks and pedestrian crossing improvements from 40 to Court House Drive).

Summary

Significant progress has been made on Complete Streets Implementation in the 66 months since adoption of the Complete Streets policy. The County will continue to maintain progress on remaining elements of Complete Streets policy implementation, as well as project completion.

cc: Lynda Eisenberg, Director Department of Planning and Zoning,
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Michelle Harrod, Administrator, Howard County Council