

Council Resolution 121-2026 Fiscal Analysis

Introduced: July 6, 2026

Fiscal Manager: Yusef Ibrahim

Legislative Intent: Council Resolution 121-2026 seeks the Howard County Council's endorsement of the ElkrIDGE Sustainable Communities application, prepared by the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) for the State's Sustainable Communities Program. If approved by the State, the ElkrIDGE area would become eligible for various State funds and resources.

ANALYSIS

Fiscal Impact:

The proposed resolution is not expected to have an immediate fiscal impact on the County's operating or capital budgets. The resolution endorses submission of the Sustainable Communities application to the State of Maryland, and it is the State that ultimately approves or denies the designation. According to the Administration, potential funding is unpredictable.

Howard County currently has three designated Sustainable Communities: Ellicott City, North Laurel-Savage, and Long Reach Village. According to the Administration, the State's revitalization grants are awarded on a competitive basis annually to eligible applicants. Applicants may be local governments or non-profit community development organizations.

According to the Administration, demand for the State grants associated with sustainable communities is highly competitive and, in their experience, funding has varied significantly by community. Ellicott City has been awarded \$8.75 million in State revitalization funding; of this total, \$5 million was awarded in 2021 for work on Lower Main Street buildings (architectural engineering, demolition, and stabilization of buildings along Lower Main Street impacted by flash flooding). North Laurel-Savage was designated in 2013 and has since received \$2.26 million in State revitalization funding. Long Reach (designated in 2016) has not yet received revitalization funding even though the County has applied for several State awards. See chart below for current Sustainable Communities within the County:

Community (Designation year)	MD State Revitalization Funding	Notes
Ellicott City (2012)	\$8,750,000	Includes \$5M awarded in 2021 for Lower Main Street buildings (architectural engineering, demolition, stabilization following flash flooding)
North Laurel-Savage (2013)	\$2,260,000	Route 1/Route 216 corridor; focused on commercial corridor revitalization, housing rehabilitation, small business/facade improvements, and preservation of community assets like Savage Mill Historic District.
Long Reach (2016)	\$0	No revitalization funding received yet, despite County applying for several State awards

Since Fiscal Year 2024, the County and its non-profit partners have received \$2.075 million in State grant awards through the County's three existing Sustainable Communities designations. DPZ provided the following breakdown by project:

Project	Sustainable Community	Funding Program	Award Year	Award Value
Court Avenue/Court Place Placemaking (creates public green space adjacent to the future Center for the Arts, Culture and History)	Ellicott City	Strategic Demolition Fund	2026	\$600,000
Historic Ellicott City Jail (transforms the vacant 19th century jail into a publicly accessible community anchor)	Ellicott City	Strategic Demolition Fund	2026	\$500,000
Old Ellicott City Historic Courthouse Outdoor Improvements and Courtroom 1 Renovations	Ellicott City	Community Legacy	2025	\$400,000
Lower Main Street Adaptive Reuse Project (renovates buildings on lower Main St.)	Ellicott City	Community Legacy	2026	\$200,000
Old Ellicott City Facade Improvement Program	Ellicott City	Maryland Facade Improvement Program (MFIP)	2024	\$100,000
Strategic Demolition for an Affordable Homeownership Initiative in North Laurel	North Laurel-Savage	Strategic Demolition Fund	2025	\$150,000
North Laurel/Savage Facade Improvement Program	North Laurel-Savage	Maryland Facade Improvement Program (MFIP)	2024	\$75,000
Upgrade & Uplift Small Business Modernization Grant	North Laurel-Savage	Community Legacy	2026	\$50,000

According to the Administration, they are not aware of any increase in tax revenues or assessed values resulting from Sustainable Community grant activities and all administrative work can be performed with current departmental staff levels. In addition, it would be difficult for the Administration to predict if having a fourth Sustainable Community would influence available funding for the other Sustainable community's ability to receive State grants.

Budget Implications:

As noted above, there are no additional costs associated with this resolution. The costs associated with applying and maintaining the Sustainable Community designation are included in the Department of Planning and Zoning FY 2027 budget under Personnel Costs of \$8,136,331(FY27)¹.

Other Notes:

None

¹ Page 153 in HC FY27 Approved Operating Budget.