



**FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

Jan H. Gardner  
*County Executive*

December 2019

Dear Council President Keegan-Ayer and Council Members,

I am pleased to present the annual report for 2019 along with the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). These documents will be formally presented to the County Council on December 17, 2019.

Frederick County soared to new heights in 2019. Our community's success rests on the foundation of honest government and our ability to work together. Working together with citizens and businesses, non-profits and faith communities, our collaborative spirit sets us apart. Together we achieve new goals and deliver good government. Our collective mission is simple. It is to make life better for people.

Making life better means a lot of things. It means generating more jobs for people who live here, so they can spend more time with their families, do work they love, give back to the community, and enjoy a high quality of life.

Making life better means helping our children to soar by providing high quality, and innovative public education. Together we ensure that all of our students – from preschool through career – have the ability to learn and grow so they can achieve their dreams, and be our productive, engaged work force of the future.



Making life better means reducing traffic congestion and making sure people can get where they need to go safely and easily. And it means creating opportunities for everyone to live healthier and to feel safe.

Making life better for Frederick County residents takes good planning. Our plan to take our community to new heights is Livable Frederick.

### **Livable Frederick**

Livable Frederick is a unique and innovative master plan for the future of Frederick County. It will help us to manage growth better and protect the things we love about Frederick County, like our agricultural heritage and our rich cultural amenities.

Our sense of community and high quality of life make Frederick County special. Livable Frederick will take our community to new places. Our



checklist includes the essential items that we will need for our journey: good-paying jobs close to home; excellent schools; effective services; beautiful parks; a vibrant arts community; and a range of places to live, from the hustle and bustle of life downtown, to the peace and quiet of our small towns and rural areas. There really is something for everyone in Frederick County.

Livable Frederick uses our shared values to steer us toward our vision for the future. Frederick County residents value our rich history, our agricultural heritage, our vibrant economy, our great schools and a healthy environment. Livable Frederick is bold and visionary. It will not only serve as a model for the future of our community, but a model for other communities across Maryland and our nation. The American Planning Association's Maryland Chapter has named Livable Frederick as the Outstanding Plan for 2019.

### **Agriculture**

Frederick County is a national leader when it comes to being good stewards of our land. One of my priorities is to ensure we leave a legacy of agriculture for future generations. We have preserved approximately 65,000 acres of rich farmland, with a goal of preserving 100,000 acres. Preserving large areas of farmland helps to keep agriculture viable.



This year, for the first time ever, we asked our farmers and our agricultural businesses what they thought were the biggest issues they faced. As a result of surveying farmers, we have done two things. We formed a work group to focus on growing value-added agriculture. And we launched a video encouraging drivers to be patient as they share the road with our farmers.

### **Economy**

Frederick County grows more than food and fiber. We grow big ideas. Research being conducted in our community may one day lead to the cure for cancer. Life science and bio-tech is putting Frederick County on the map. This summer, our bioscience and technology companies were showcased in a promotional video that aired on network and public television stations nationwide.

Businesses are creating jobs in Frederick County because they know we are a great place to do business. Kite Pharma's facility under construction in Urbana will bring hundreds of new innovative and high-technology jobs to our area. And they will be producing cutting-edge cancer treatments, making life better for people.



Kite Pharma's move to Frederick County was the biggest announcement of new jobs, not just in Frederick County, but in the entire State of Maryland. New businesses are looking to locate here, and our existing businesses are looking to expand. We have reached a record 104,000 jobs in Frederick County, adding about 6,500 net new jobs in the past five years. Our economy is soaring, and our future is bright. Frederick County is projected to see the fastest rate of business

growth in the state of Maryland. Our rate in the number of new jobs and new businesses over the past year alone is nearly double the state's increase.

Everyone deserves a chance to succeed and soar. Our goal is to ensure that everyone shares in our community's prosperity. I'm proud that Frederick County recently graduated our third class of Future Minority Business Leaders, and I look forward to seeing their future accomplishments.

## Education

Our long-term economic prosperity depends on a well-educated workforce, and that begins in our public schools. I'm committed to keeping the promise of public education and to make sure that education remains the path to opportunity for all of our students. I am proud to have made a record investment in public education both inside and outside the classroom.

This year we fully implemented a new pay scale for our teachers and school staff. We know having the best teachers in the classroom will deliver the best result for our students.



Frederick County is flying high with innovation in our public education system. The LYNX program at Frederick High School offers flexibility for students to gain high school credit outside the classroom through work experience, life experience and more. The new early college program, a partnership between our schools and Frederick Community College, will allow students to graduate with both a diploma and an associate's degree.



I believe every child deserves a seat inside a school building. That's why I've accelerated our school construction program. The new Urbana Elementary School will open for students next fall, relieving overcrowding at the elementary level in Urbana. A replacement Rock Creek School broke ground this fall in Walkersville, and a new Blue Heron

Elementary School will begin construction in Lake Linganore and open to students in the fall of 2021. An addition to Oakdale Middle School and a new Waverley Elementary School are in the works, too. I am proud to continue the record investment my administration has made in new school construction.

## Community Needs



Next year, we expect to have more people over age 60 than school-aged children living in Frederick County. To serve this growing population, we have added services and expanded hours at our senior centers to help more people connect to resources.

Frederick County is a caring community. This year we committed to become a Dementia-Friendly County. We are putting in place a plan to help seniors facing dementia to age in place where they feel most comfortable, and that's in their homes.

Everyone needs a great place to live. While our community offers a lot of housing choices, we know the cost of housing impacts our seniors and our young families. Our goal is to make sure that people can both live and work in Frederick County. And that's important to a bright and prosperous future. This year we saw the opening of 59 beautiful affordable rental units at 520 North Market Street, a building that once housed a county school and then county offices. The Ballenger Run community built some of our first moderately priced dwelling units that opened to renters this fall. Legislation also passed this year dedicating a portion of our existing recordation tax to create affordable housing and assist first-time home-buyers.

## Notable Achievements

- In August, we celebrated the opening of the new Myersville Community Library, a 7,000-square-foot branch that recognizes an important piece of local history with a restoration of trolley car. In its first quarter, the branch hosted 9,917 visitors, who checked out over 16,500 items. The Frederick County Public Libraries system now includes nine locations throughout the county.



- In the past year, more than 2 million people visited our parks. We are currently constructing a major expansion of the Utica Park and a brand new Othello Regional Park near Brunswick.



- Frederick County was awarded a \$5.5 million federal grant to hire 38 new firefighters, one of the largest SAFER grants in the nation. These new positions will allow us to provide better response time to citizens, to reduce overtime, and to provide service to some of our volunteer companies that have asked for support.

- Public safety partners, the Child Advocacy Center and Frederick County Public Schools joined together to launch Handle with Care, a program that helps children who have experienced traumatic experiences. The partnership includes the Division of Citizens Services, the Division of Fire and Rescue Services, FCPS, and every law enforcement agency in Frederick County.

- We awarded grants to 24 human service non-profit organizations in Frederick County through our Community Partnership Grants program. These grants allow us to leverage our efforts, to make a bigger difference with our human services nonprofit partners, and go a long way to make sure that everyone can be successful and share our community's prosperity.
- We installed a solar array on a closed section of the Reichs Ford Road landfill in August. The 7,776-panel array creates enough energy to power almost 20% of the County's general electric usage. Seven county buildings are being powered by the solar project, including Winchester Hall. The solar energy also is being used to power up charging stations for TransIT's all-electric buses, allowing the buses to run 100% on renewable energy.

### **Strong Finances**

We have been able to build parks, libraries, fire stations, and more without raising taxes. We live within our means. Because we are fiscally responsible, and the county is well managed, we are able to get more bang for our dollar. This September, we received the lowest interest rate in our county's history when we sold bonds. That low interest rate saved taxpayers well over \$10 million. The savings were possible because of our AAA bond rating from all three New York City bond rating agencies.



Frederick County's economy is on the move, and our finances are strong. Frederick County's financial outlook is bright and our long-term conservative approach to budgeting and managing county government meets the highest financial standards, according to an audit of the Consolidated Annual Financial Report, which is required by the County's charter.

Financial highlights show:

- Frederick County is in good, solid financial shape. The County's overall financial position improved in FY19.
- Property and income tax rates remained constant for Fiscal Years 2016, 2017, 2018 2019, and 2020 and reflect a strong economy.
- The overall FY19 General Fund budget reflected a modest increase of 4.58%. This was in line with surrounding jurisdictions, including the City of Frederick (5.8%).
- Funding for Frederick County Public Schools in FY19 exceeded Maintenance of Effort by \$7.2 million.

### **Awards and honors earned in 2019**

- The U.S. Green Building Council certified Frederick County as a LEED Silver Community for implementing practical and measurable strategies and solutions aimed at improving sustainability and a high quality of life. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.
- The Division of Finance and the Budget Office both earned awards of excellence from the Government Finance Officers Association.
- Urbana High School was named a 2019 National Blue Ribbon School, the only high school in the State of Maryland to earn the recognition.
- Our efforts to replenish our forest cover earned a 2019 Chesapeake Forest Champion Award from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the U.S. Forest Service.

The year's accomplishments and activities are outlined in a video presentation of the State of the County address. The video can be viewed at [www.tinyurl.com/StateofCounty2019](http://www.tinyurl.com/StateofCounty2019).

It has been a great year in Frederick County. We've embraced our rich history, invested in our people and places, and taken care of our citizens, ensuring a bright future. We are leading the way with innovation and excellence. Frederick County continues to be a great place to live, work, have a family, and retire.

Sincerely,



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Jan H. Gardner  
Frederick County Executive

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**2019 Legislation**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Adopted</b>	<b>Vote</b>
19-01	Revisions to the Frederick County Employees Retirement Plan: Grant Funded	CM Keegan-Ayer on behalf of CE	02-19-2019	6-0-1
19-02	Revisions to the Frederick County Employees Retirement Plan: Interest On Employee Contributions – Terminated Non-Vested Employees	CM Keegan-Ayer on behalf of CE	02-19-2019	6-0-1
19-03	Revisions to the Frederick County Employees Retirement Plan: IRS Requested Changes	CM Keegan-Ayer on behalf of CE	02-19-2019	6-0-1
19-04	Revisions to the Frederick County Employees Retirement Plan: Ad Hoc Cost of Living Adjustment	CM Keegan-Ayer on behalf of CE	02-19-2019	6-0-1
19-05	Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreements	CM McKay on behalf of CE	05-21-2019	6-1
19-06	Impact Fees	CM Donald	04-16-2019	6-0-1
19-07	Anti-Discrimination Bill Chapter 1-2	CM Fitzwater	06-18-2019	7-0
19-08	Anti-Discrimination Bill Chapter 2-2	CM Fitzwater	06-18-2019	7-0
19-09	Zoning Text Amendment Automobile Filling and Service Stations and Convenience Stores	CM Dacey	08-20-2019	7-0
19-10	Indoor Sports Recreation Facilities Without Race Tracks	CM Hagen	07-16-2019	6-0-1
19-11	Hotel Rental Tax Audit	CM McKay	07-16-2019	6-0-1
19-12	Allocation of Recordation Tax Proceeds to the Housing Initiative Fund for the Facilitation of Affordable Housing in Frederick County	CM Fitzwater on behalf of CE	09-03-2019	7-0
19-13	Repeal of Certain Provisions of Frederick County Personnel Rules Pertaining to County Council Employees	CM Keegan-Ayer	10-15-2019	7-0

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**2019 Resolutions**

- Termination of Frederick County, Maryland Defined Contribution Plan Resolution No. 19-01
- Authorizing Resolution for the FY 2020 TransIT Grant Application Resolution No. 19-02
- Rezoning Case #R-18-01 Whitmore/Biggs Ford Solar Center, LLC Resolution No. 19-03
- WS-18-05 Bueso Forman & Myers, LLC Resolution No. 19-04
- WS-18-06 Town of Myersville Resolution No. 19-05
- WS-18-07 Division of Planning and Permitting Resolution No. 19-06
- Amending Resolution No. 97-15 Urbana Community Development Authority Resolution No. 19-07
- Amended Monocacy Scenic River Management Plan 2017 Resolution No. 19-08
- Establishment of the Frederick County Charter Review Commission Resolution No. 19-09
- Tax Levy for July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Resolution No. 19-10
- CDBG - Capital Improvements Bell Court Apartments Resolution No. 19-11
- CDBG - Homebuyer Assistance Program Resolution No. 19-12
- Mutual Aid Agreement Law Enforcement Resolution No. 19-13
- Resolution in Support of Advantage MD Conditional Loan for Kite Pharma Resolution No. 19-14
- Spring 2019 Water and Sewer Amendments - Case WS 19-01 Resolution No. 19-15
- Spring 2019 Water and Sewer Amendments - Case WS 19-02 Resolution No. 19-16
- Spring 2019 Water and Sewer Amendments - Case WS 19-03 Resolution No. 19-17
- Spring 2019 Water and Sewer Amendments - Case WS 19-04 Resolution No. 19-18
- Bond Authorizing Resolution for the September 2019 Sale of General Obligation Public Facilities Refunding Bonds, Taxable Series 2019B Resolution No. 19-19
- Installment Purchase Program - James and Sharon Keilholtz Resolution 19-20
- Ballenger Run DRRA AMendment Resolution No. 19-21
- Sale of General Obligation Public Facilities Bonds, Series 2019A Resolution No. 19-22
- County Adoption of the Livable Frederick Master Plan Resolution No. 19-23
- Ox-Fibre Affordable Housing PILOT Resolution No. 19-24
- YMCA Economic Development Revenue Bonds Resolution No. 19-25

# FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

 ELECTED POSITIONS

