

County Councilman David Marks Fifth District Newsletter

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MESSAGE FROM COUNCILMAN MARKS: **ADVANCING OUR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PRIORITIES**

Since my election, I have worked to lighten school overcrowding throughout the Fifth District—by working with our partners to [build additions at Stoneleigh and Hampton Elementary Schools](#), for instance, and [constructing Honeygo Elementary School in the northeast](#). Unfortunately, two critical projects were put on hold when the state failed to approve funding last year. By not passing the Build to Learn Act, the new elementary school at Rossville Boulevard and the proposed middle school on King Avenue were delayed. The state funds one-third of school construction costs.

This year, it is imperative that the Maryland General Assembly passes legislation that will allow these two schools to advance. Both [Governor Hogan](#) and [legislative leaders](#) have proposed bills. We have cause for optimism, but I encourage you to contact your state legislators to express your support. I also believe there are important recommendations in the Kirwan Commission report that can improve academic success.



New middle school rendering, courtesy BCPS.

With these school construction priorities funded, we need to turn our attention to other needs. Towson High School is one of the most overcrowded and deteriorating buildings in the county, and land must be secured for a new high school in eastern Baltimore County.

I downzoned property to lighten overcrowding until new schools can be built. As an example, the County Council downzoned the 48-acre Gerst Farm to one house per acre until two new schools could advance. A developer has submitted a plan for the property in which about half the land is identified for senior housing. visit <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/countycouncil>.

COUNCILMAN MARKS STRIPS FEES, SUPPORTS BUSINESS INCENTIVES IN GUN SECURITY BILL

At the Baltimore County Council meeting on January 21st, Councilman Marks supported amendments to the County Executive's gun security bill that softened the impact on gun retailers. Specifically, he sponsored an amendment that waived all fees, and supported financial assistance for businesses to construct improvements such as bollards.

The legislation is designed to better secure gun retailers from robberies. Over Christmas break, Councilman Marks visited every gun retailer in his district affected by the legislation.

NEW TREES PLANTED ALONG GOUCHER BOULEVARD

In late January, Baltimore County planted 18 new trees along Goucher Boulevard in Campus Hills. These trees replace ones that were removed due to age and disease. They beautify a major corridor in the Towson area, and are similar to those planted along Bosley Avenue in September.



Elm trees, courtesy Green Towson Alliance.

SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT FOR TOWSON PUBLIC ART

Last year, Councilman Marks worked with the Towson Chamber of Commerce, Towson Creative Partnership, and other stakeholders to kick off a public art campaign in Downtown Towson. The first mural was painted on Pennsylvania Avenue in July. New artwork will be painted on the side of the Towson library. There is a call for submissions, with entries due in late April. For more information, visit <https://www.towsoncreativepartnership.com/bcpl-towson-library>.



Towson library, courtesy BCPL.

COUNCILMAN MARKS SUPPORTS LEGISLATION FOR NIGHTTIME HEARINGS

Councilman Marks is cosponsoring legislation that would move the Council's work sessions to the early evening. This bipartisan resolution is cosponsored by Councilmen Wade Kach and Izzy Patoka. Should the legislation pass, meetings would move from 2 p.m. on Tuesdays to 6 p.m., a more convenient time for the public.

TOWN HALL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 31ST

Councilman Marks will join County Executive Olszewski for a budget town hall meeting on Tuesday, March 31st at 6 p.m. at Towson High School (69 Cedar Avenue).

From 2016 to 2017, a total of two people testified on Baltimore County's budget. In 2019, over 2,000 residents attended, with hundreds sharing priorities for the county. This year, the county will offer additional on-site resources from Baltimore County agencies to provide more immediate access to services and further connect residents with available resources.

The meeting will be livestreamed for those who cannot attend. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/BaltCoGov>.