

County Councilman David Marks Fifth District Newsletter



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Serving Towson, Loch Raven Village, Carney, the Oak Crest Community, Fullerton, Perry Hall, and Kingsville

MESSAGE FROM COUNCILMAN MARKS: CORONAVIRUS SHAPES COUNTY BUDGET

The County Council sets the parameters by which spending can grow in the budget. When the Council's Spending Affordability Committee recommended guidelines earlier this year, it was before the coronavirus forced a lockdown of much of the economy. As the lockdown continues and revenue continues to decline, it will have a more profound impact on Baltimore County's budget.

In April, County Executive Olszewski unveiled his Fiscal Year 2021 budget plan, which can be seen here: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/budfin/budget/index.html>. The budget is based on the spending parameters identified before the coronavirus forced the lockdown, which means the County Council will likely need to make significant cuts. As presented:

There is no change to the property tax rate. If you are paying more in taxes, it is because state assessments have changed the value of your property. Baltimore County only approves the rate—not the assessments.

- **The income tax rate is unchanged.** Last year, the County Council raised the rate as high as allowed by law (I opposed this increase).
- The budget does include funding for such local projects as the Towson Circulator, improvements to the Fullerton fire station, and expanded parking at the Seven Oaks Senior Center.
- The proposal includes full county funding for two new schools in the northeast and an expansion at Pine Grove Middle School. [I have joined with School Board member Julie Henn in urging Governor Hogan to sign the Build to Learn Act](#), providing the state share of the funding.

There is always an opportunity to trim the fat in any budget—last year, I voted for \$41 million in cuts. **I will oppose any effort to raise the tax rate during tough times.**

David Marks

COUNCILMAN MARKS REACTIVATES COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL



Councilman Marks has reactivated the Fifth District Community Advisory Council to discuss common objectives for the area. If you represent a neighborhood association or business group that is not already receiving updates, please contact Councilman Marks at dmarks@baltimorecountymd.gov.

LEARN THE LATEST NEWS ON THE CORONAVIRUS

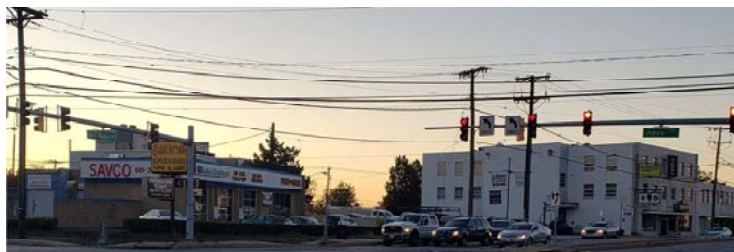
Baltimore County's priority right now is to contain the coronavirus and protect our citizens, particularly the most vulnerable.

- For a summary of county actions—including the status of agencies—go here: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/News/coronavirus.html>
- Updates from the State of Maryland are here: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>
- If you have questions or concerns, call the county hotline at 410-887-3616.

TASK FORCE NIXES IDEA FOR LOCH RAVEN TRAFFIC CIRCLE

Last year, Councilman Marks formed a task force to look at ideas for improving the area centered at Loch Raven Boulevard and Joppa Road. The task force has been particularly concerned about congestion, which is why the Maryland State Highway Administration completed a traffic study at the intersection.

The state identified three alternatives: improving signal times, adding lanes, or building a traffic circle. [The task force has endorsed the first option.](#) Adding lanes or creating a roundabout would cost between \$8 million to \$20 million with negligible benefits.



COUNTY TO INSTALL ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC CALMING IN RODGERS FORGE

Baltimore County will install additional traffic calming to slow speeds near Dumbarton Middle School. The \$60,000 project involves the construction of raised crosswalks on Stevenson Lane near Lanark and Stanmore Roads.



The county installed traffic calming near Perry Hall Middle School last year. If your community has a speeding issue, the application for calming is here: https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/publicworks/traffic/traffic_calming.html.

CONTRACTORS RESURFACE ADDITIONAL ROUTES

Highway contractors have used the slowdown in traffic to complete some delayed and long-anticipated projects.

The Maryland State Highway Administration is resurfacing Belair Road from the Beltway to Dunfield Road. The county is resurfacing Baker Lane in Perry Hall, Red Clover Court in Carney, and several routes in Woodcroft and West Towson.

These are “leftover” projects that were not completed last years. New projects will be initiated this year.