

DISTRICT 2

# 2023 Year in Review

## NEWSLETTER



Council Member

# WANIKA FISHER

DISTRICT 2

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL



Escanee aquí para ver  
el boletín completo en español



**Dear Neighbors of District 2,**

**I**t was a very busy and active start for the County Council, and for me as your District 2 Council Member! It is my privilege to serve you. I continue to work daily to honor your trust by extending priority attention to the needs and concerns of our residents and communities in District 2.

The Council has been meeting weekly to consider legislation, make land-use decisions, discuss health policy, review and adopt a new County spending plan, receive public testimony and presentations, conduct briefings and more!

Additionally, to keep us engaged and connected, I have held numerous community events across District 2, and I want to thank everyone for participating and working with me to improve our Quality of Life. Everything works better when we do it together!

In this newsletter, you will find a quick review of District 2 happenings that have taken place across the community. Also included is a summary of FY 2024 budget victories I have secured for our district.

Thank you again for being an active part of our community. Whether it was calling our office with an enforcement issue, expressing your concerns at one of my listening sessions, attending a community event, or testifying before the County Council, I deeply appreciate your partnership and dedication to making District 2 an even more incredible place to call home.

There are lots of ways for us to stay connected. My office contact information, including phone, email, web and social media, is included in this newsletter as well, so please hold onto it as a handy reference guide.

With appreciation and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wanika Fisher".

Wanika B. Fisher, Esq.

    : WanikaFisher

**Year in Review Newsletter**

# HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE YEAR



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Every year during the month of February, we honor and celebrate the inspiring contributions of Black Americans, including Marylanders and Prince Georgians, to the history, progress, and future of our nation and communities. The national 2023 Black History Month theme, "Black Resistance," explored how Black Americans have addressed historic and ongoing systems of oppression, and how we are working together to achieve a society where we can all be free and thrive.



## ADAB IWD 2023: THE ROLE OF THE AFRICAN WOMAN IN COMMUNITY BUILDING: THE AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE



It was an honor to serve as a panelist and share the room with so many phenomenal women during the African Diaspora Advisory Board Panel Discussion. A big thank you to Prince George's County African Diaspora Advisory Board Chair, Vincent Iweanoge Esq., for his vision and leadership.



I'm so proud to be the first daughter of African immigrants to be elected to the Prince George's County Council and in the first of our state's history when I was elected to the Maryland General Assembly in 2018. It was a pleasure to join them for an International Women's Day panel discussion sponsored by the Prince George's County African Diaspora Advisory Board.

# LATINO Town Hall



**D**istrict 2 is home to the largest Latino community in Prince George's County and we welcomed the opportunity to bring resources, organizations, and stakeholders of our community together during the inaugural District 2 Latino Town Hall. It was a signal honor to hear from the event's featured keynote speaker, Maryland State Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk, the first Latina serving as Committee Chair in the Maryland General Assembly. #latinotownhall2023

## PROBATION BEFORE JUDGEMENT



After five years of fervently working with stakeholders and advocates, I'm delighted to say HB 193 SB 211 Probation Before Judgement -Probation Agreements has officially been signed by our Governor. This bill will allow a court to place a defendant on probation before judgment if the defendant pleads not guilty, the court finds facts justifying a finding of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, and specified conditions are met. This new law went into effect on October 1, 2023.



## PUBLIC SAFETY TOWN HALL



I hosted the first Public Safety Town Hall where I invited members of the community out to discuss their concerns with top leaders in Public Safety. It is important that we hear from our community so we are able to hear and address their concerns promptly. I take public safety seriously and we will continue to work to improve safety in our communities for every single resident. Thank you Chief Aziz, States Attorney Braveboy, Fire Chief Green, Sheriff Carr, and Senator Augustine, and mostly importantly, the community for joining us! Together we will make our communities safer.

## ROLLING CREST & VICTORY CREST MEET & GREET

It was wonderful to fellowship with senior residents at our Victory Crest and Rolling Crest Communities! We enjoyed spending the day with our seniors. Our seniors are critical to our communities. Their concerns and ideas are necessary for District 2 to thrive.



## ART DISTRICT COMMUNITY FORUM

Art Works Now has a stated mission of building and nurturing community through inclusive visual arts and social justice experiences, and it was a pleasure to experience their incredible work during a Meet & Greet event at their location in Hyattsville. A special thank you to Executive Director Aimee Olivo for hosting the event and providing an opportunity to connect with various artists and studios in District 2. We are fortunate to have so many talented and amazing artists in our community. Prince George's County Arts and Humanity Gateway Artists started the work to help artists stay in their studio space.



## COFFEE WITH A COP

It was a pleasure to start the day at the Coffee with a Cop event. It was a great opportunity to show our gratitude to public safety officers who keep our residents and communities safe. Thanks as well to the many community members who joined us!



## CASA

Standing with strong female leadership and a community of freedom fighters to celebrate the passage of the Family Prosperity Act offered a powerful moment. The Family Prosperity Act includes a permanent expansion of the earned income tax credits to ITIN taxpayers.



## PRINCE GEORGE'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Thank you to the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce for hosting an informative legislative roundup. The time was incredibly productive. The Chamber is a non-profit alliance of over 600 businesses, representing over a quarter of a million employees, making it one of the largest chambers in the state of Maryland and one of the largest chambers in the Washington Metropolitan region. Thanks to the businesses looking to invest and grow our communities.



Team Prince George's County participated in the **2023 International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Retail Conference** in Las Vegas Nevada. The Prince George's Economic Development Team was led by County Executive Angela Alsobrooks and Prince George's County Economic Development (EDC) President and CEO, David Iannucci. It was a pleasure to work with my colleagues, along with the County Executive and Governor Wes Moore, to bring new amenities and quality retail to Maryland, Prince George's County, and District 2.

The District 2 Team had a wonderful time visiting the residents of **Friendship Arms Apartments**. It was a delight to share time with the seniors as they enjoyed an afternoon gathering in the courtyard. Seniors are the foundation of our communities, and we had the opportunity to sit and chat with many of them, including one who has lived in the community over 45 years! They really know how to have good time!

## PRIDE MONTH

Prince George's County is home to several vibrant communities with residents from every walk of life. District 3 Council Member Eric C. Olson and I proudly stood hand in hand with our LGBTQ+ community to celebrate Pride Month in June. Thank you to Denizens for hosting us and helping to create safe spaces! Thanks you La Clinica del Pablo! We are Prince George's Pride Strong!



# BUDGET WINS FOR DISTRICT 2 COMMUNITIES



In keeping with the County Charter, the County Council received the County Executive's proposed FY 2024 County Budget in March. Following a thoughtful and deliberate budget review process, the County Council approved a balanced \$5.4 billion Operating Budget for the new fiscal year, which began July 1, 2023. The adopted General Fund totals \$4.5 billion, and about 62%, of those monies directly support Prince George's County Public Schools. During the budget review process, the Council was made aware that projected revenues dropped by \$60 million, however even with this challenging news, I am able to report several FY 2024 Budget wins for District 2:

## **Cool Spring Judith Hoyer Modernization (\$4,812,000)**

Funding to increase capacity, including 560 additional seats for a total of 1,095 students in grades pre-k through 5th.

## **Northern Adelphi High School (\$4,000,000)**

The new design will accommodate a 2,000-student seating capacity and cover 304,000 square feet.

## **Lane Manor Park Building-Playground (\$1,000,000)**

Replacement and upgrades to the existing playground, to include an inclusive play area accessible to all.

## **Prince George's Multigenerational Center (\$20,833,000)**

Money allocated for a Multigenerational Center in District 2. Recommendations from the feasibility study suggest the following: 2 indoor courts, a 3-lane track, a 10-lane indoor pool, and a small leisure pool with seating for 250 people. Multipurpose rooms and space dedicated to programming will also be included.

## **Rehabilitation of the Hyattsville Fire/EMS Station (\$3,000,000)**

**Heurich Park (\$567,000)**  
Turf field replacement.

## **Lane Manor Splash Park Repairs (\$1,432,000 FY 2025)**

## **Langley Park CC Trail and Park Lighting (\$1,000,000)**

Project will provide lighting for the park and Northwest Branch of the Anacostia Trail in Langley Park.

## **Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail (\$210,000)**

Project includes the design and construction of approximately two miles of asphalt trails between College Park and Hyattsville.

## **Rollingcrest-Chillum Community Center Upgrades (\$7,234,000)**

Following completion of the feasibility study and program of requirements, the project design, construction bid documents, and budget will be developed.

# ADDITIONAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

## Safe Neighborhoods

- Close to 100 firefighters will be recruited to alleviate significant overtime costs Fire/EMS Department Budget \$261 million
- Providing wrap-around services for afterschool programming, mental health services, workforce development, and housing support through the Hope in Anti-Violence Action Initiative \$1 billion
- \$2 million supports mobile mental health crisis response

## Environment/Beautification

- Vision Zero Prince George's will provide \$41 million to support outreach and various road safety improvements/projects in Prince George's County.
- Increasing the Stormwater Management Fund by \$16 million to help combat climate change and mitigate flooding and stormwater management. Capital improvement programs to fund \$141 million to flood protection projects.
- Litter reduction/beautification programs to enhance street sweeping and litter removal services in the Department of Public Works & Transportation \$9.9 million

## Economic Development & Affordable Housing

- Resourcing ways to preserve and create affordable housing \$45.2 million

- Expanding Emergency Rental Assistance Program eligibility \$14.5 million
- Providing more opportunities for procurement and assistance programs for local, small, and minority-owned businesses \$17.8 million
- Overall economic development agency funding \$10.8 million

## Education & Youth Development

- The FY 2024 Budget fully funds the Prince George's County Public Schools request at \$2.8 billion, which represents 62 percent of the County Budget General Fund.

The Council has also increased funding for:

- Library Sunday hours
- SNAP program match \$346,000
- County veterans \$548,700
- Office of Human Rights for continued implementation of language access for public services \$3 million
- Prince George's County Multi Generational Center

## DPIE Expansion

Department of Permits, Inspections, and Enforcement funding for approximately 30 unfilled positions, including 10 new positions to bolster code enforcement, inspections, and permitting.

# LEGISLATIVE WINS OF 2023

Over the legislative year of 2023, Councilmember Wanika Fisher has advocated, sponsored and voted for legislation to improve the lives of District 2 residents.

### **CB-32-2023 - BETTER BAG BILL**

As of January 1st, 2024, Prince George's County prohibits all retail establishments from providing plastic carryout bags to shoppers and, with certain exceptions, shall charge at least 10 cents for each paper carryout or reusable bag provided to a customer.

### **CB-07-2023 RENT STABILIZATION**

The legislation establishing the Rent Stabilization Act of 2023. The measure temporarily amends the Landlord-Tenant Code to limit landlords' ability to increase rent for tenants above 3% over a 12-month period.

### **CB-009-2023 AN ORDINANCE CON-**

### **CERNING TOBACCO SHOPS, ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE SHOPS, OR RETAIL TOBACCO BUSINESSES**

This legislation amends the Zoning Ordinance to include reasonable parameters as to hours of operation, sign displays as a criteria for approval of Special Exceptions.

### **CB-031-2023 AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING CONVENIENCE STORES - GAS STATIONS - TOBACCO SHOPS - TOBACCO PRODUCT DISPLAY AND SALES AREA**

The purpose of this bill was to modify the definitions of Convenience Store in order to clarify the percentage of certain uses to dis-

play the sale of tobacco or cannabis related products.

### **CB-037-2023 - AN ACT CONCERNING ILLEGAL DUMPING**

The purpose of this bill was to modify the definitions of Convenience Store in order to clarify the percentage of certain uses to display the sale of tobacco or cannabis related products.

### **CB-042-2023 AN ACT CONCERNING PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SENIOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM ACT OF 2023**

# LEGISLATIVE WINS OF 2023

This bill created the Prince George's County Senior Housing Assistance Pilot Program which provides financial residential rental assistance to Prince George's County senior residents based on AMI level. This program also provides residential mortgage payment assistance to Prince George's County senior residents based on AMI level. .

## CR-18-2023 GUARANTEED BASIC IN-COME PILOT PROGRAM

The purpose of this legislation was to create a pilot program for Guaranteed Basic Income to improve the lives of residents living at or below the poverty line. This legislation will give residents that qualify direct cash payments.

## CB-88-2023 CANNIBIS REINVESTMENT AND RESTORATION BOARD

This is a bill that would create a Board that focuses on reinvesting the revenue from cannabis sales back into our communities. This bill would greatly benefit disenfranchised neighborhoods while funding areas such as public health, business assistance and a reinvestment and repair fund.

## CR-77-2023 RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A WORKGROUP TO STUDY LGBTQIA+

Bill established a work group to provide staff and resources to address issues around the LGBTQI+ plus community.

## CB 69-2024 AN ACT CONCERNING URBAN STREET DESIGN POLICY AND STANDARDS

The purpose of adopting an urban street design policy and standards pursuant to the 2023 Urban Streets Design Standards, incorporated in the Department of Public Works and Transportation's "Specifications and Standards for Roadways and Bridges" (2007), as revised in 2023, consistent with the Council's 2014 approval of its most current general plan for the County, Plan Prince George's 2035; and generally regarding urban street design standards.

## ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER MONTH

It is hard to put into words the level of gratitude I feel for everyone who attended the AAPI Breaking Barriers Program. We are so fortunate to have such an array of different nationalities and cultures that call Prince George's home. During the program we awarded Mr. David Valderama with a lifetime service award. To see Mr. Valderama, the first Asian American elected to the Maryland General Assembly there alongside our current Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, the first South Asian to hold statewide office, it was impossible to not get a little emotional at the great strides made in our county, state, and country. Special thank you to the Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller for serving as our keynote speaker and sharing her inspirational story.



## 'WORKING FOR ALL OF US' EASTERN AVENUE COMMUNITY WALK



Responding to a shared commitment to area improvements along Eastern Avenue, I joined District of Columbia Ward 5 Council Member Zachary Parker for the "Working for All of Us" Community Walk in March. Council Member Parker and I share portions of Eastern Avenue, and after each of us heard from our constituents regarding improvements for this area, we invited residents and interested stakeholders to walk the community with us and identify where improvements were needed. It was wonderful to engage with residents in the surrounding community. Thank you to Mayor Muriel Bowser, Council Member Parker, and all our community partners and residents for joining with us. We look forward to putting these ideas into action to address safety and quality of life issues in our communities!



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Full Newsletter in  
English and Spanish  
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**Constituent Areas**

Adelphi  
Avondale  
Brentwood  
Carole Highlands  
Chillum  
Green Meadows  
Hyattsville  
Langley Park  
Lewisdale  
Mount Rainier  
North Brentwood

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