

News Release

Board of Public Works Approves \$418 Million for Projects Across Maryland

Comptroller highlights funding for community initiatives across the state and issues related to deferred maintenance

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (August 28, 2024) — Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman joined Gov. Wes Moore and Treasurer Dereck Davis at Wednesday's Board of Public Works (BPW) meeting to approve more than \$418 million for 105 initiatives and projects throughout Maryland.

The Board approved an award of \$24 million for 21 projects to the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative (BRNI) and the National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund (NED) supporting initiatives in Baltimore City, as well as Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties, which include playgrounds, mixed-used development, affordable housing for seniors, and investment in the College Park Airport.

Governor Moore noted the direct impact on the communities and credited Secretary of Housing and Community Development Jake Day for bringing roughly \$24 million in investments to those areas.

Comptroller Lierman noted that BRNI was created under the leadership of late Speaker of the House Michael Busch during the 2016 General Assembly session with legislation introduced by former 46th District Delegate Pete Hammen.

"We had to push to make sure these were funded in the past administration. So, I really appreciate the full funding of the programs recognizing the catalytic effect that these investments have on building stronger and more thriving neighborhoods. I will add it led to generating more revenue over the long term. So, I am always thrilled to see the BRNI projects come."

On an issue of procurement and sustainability, Comptroller Lierman asked Thomas Hickey, associate vice chancellor for procurement and real property initiatives for the University System of Maryland (USM), to explain the revisions to its procurement policies and procedures presented on today's agenda, and to highlight the efforts of work group to review its sustainability goals.

Mr. Hickey noted that the USM's original procurement policies were approved in 2000 and updated in 2016. Eight years later there have been several statutory changes, along with advice from the Maryland State Attorney General's Office, requiring additional revisions. Comptroller Lierman noted USM's work on sustainability and contracts approved by BPW that contribute to cleaner and more environmentally resilient facilities.

Mr. Hickey explained USM's membership in the Green Purchasing Committee, as well as the Green Building Council. and that the system follows all requirements set by the Maryland Department of Budget and Management in order for the Capital Program to meet the state's climate goals. He also outlined plans for USM to do legal and policy training with its procurement professionals.

During the meeting, Comptroller Lierman also discussed an emergency contract to address deferred maintenance for a Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Service building. DPSCS identified a leak in the roof in 2023 and added repairs to the capital maintenance list. However, it was cut from FY2025 budget.

"Certainly, this is not an issue unique to DPSCS since we certainly see this happen for boilers and broken pipes," Comptroller Lierman said. "I do think it is important to highlight that we have real needs in the state. Real capital needs. A very constrained capital budget just to maintain the buildings that we have. I think you maintain about 1400 facilities. It's a lot of facilities."

Secretary Atif Chaudry of the Department of General Service shared that his agency is working closely with other state agencies to prioritize the most urgent building maintenance projects.

He also added that DGS is taking a more systematic approach for funding buildings, determining which ones should be renovated, and which buildings need to be major construction initiatives.

In all, the BPW approved 105 items, representing a total State expenditure of \$418,493,029.80. A comprehensive list of items approved are as follows:

- Approved grant agreements for 12 recipients for 14 projects located in 6 counties and Baltimore City with a total value of \$12,391,128.
- 8 items awarding \$4,135,948.45 to prime certified small business primes.
- 2 items awarding \$1,886,381.90 to certified minority business enterprise primes.
- 9 items awarded with established participation goals for minority business enterprises.
- 2 items awarded with established participation goals for veteran-owned small business enterprises.

The next meeting of the Board of Public Works is September 11.

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