



Fiscal Year 2023

Advisory Committee

Recommendations

Presented to

County Executive Steuart Pittman

March 25, 2022



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*All documents referenced in this report, including Executive Order 53, LRCIF Grant Application, Map of 3-Mile Radius, Request for Public Comment, Public Comment Summary and Meeting Minutes are available for review on the Laurel Race Course Impact Fund Advisory Committee website at **accounty.org/LRCIF**.*

Letter From The Chair

On behalf of the Laurel Race Course Impact Fund Committee, I am pleased to submit our recommendations for grant recipients for Fiscal Year 2023. The committee has been instrumental in recommending projects within the 3-mile radius of the Race Course for many years. The 198 corridor has a landscaped median, up-to-date fire and rescue equipment, and extra library services thanks to the efforts of previous committees. This year's committee has built on that record of success and expanded the application process to include even more voices and opportunities to benefit the area.

A total of \$331,944 in grants is being recommended to address a variety of community needs from security to road beautification. Applicants ranged from large established organizations to a group of second graders who researched and completed their own application for new classroom chairs. Five grants will benefit the local elementary schools, three will address food insecurity, and one will help bring a heritage festival to the community. Grants will benefit our disabled neighbors, our African immigrant families, and everyone who travels down Route 198 or visits the library.

I want to thank County Executive Steuart Pittman for his commitment to ensuring a diverse group of residents and communities were represented on the committee. The variety of voices and experiences contributing to the discussions led to rich conversations about the current and future needs of the area. I am hopeful that one outcome of the committee, along with the direct benefit of the recommended grants, will be continued collaboration to meet the needs and expand services in the vicinity of the Race Course.

The committee would not have been able to complete its charge without the excellent logistical support of Dr. Jennifer Purcell. It is also grateful for the other members of the County Executive's office who shared their time and expertise: Pam Jordan, Lori Rhodes, and Chris Trumbauer.

Thank you to the many members of the public who submitted comments on the applications. Your feedback was extremely valuable for determining the wants and needs of the area. A special thank you to my fellow committee members. I appreciate the time and thoughtfulness

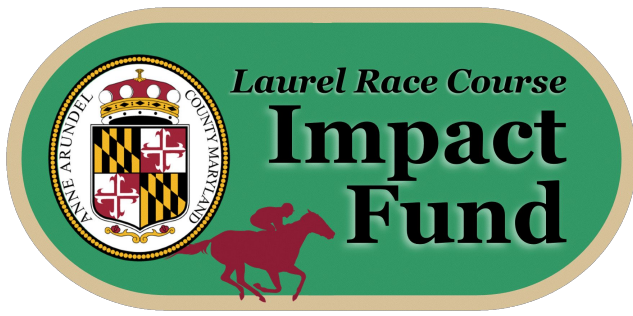
that each of you dedicated to this process, and I am confident that together we have recommended grants that will make a positive impact in our community.

Sincerely,

Julie Hummer

Chair, LRCIF Advisory Committee





Executive Summary

The Laurel Race Course Impact Fund (LRCIF) Advisory Committee was created by Executive Order to ensure a fair and transparent process for distributing grant funds benefiting communities within a 3-mile radius of the Laurel Race Course.

The LRCIF Advisory Committee recommends to County Executive Pittman that 13 of the 15 proposed projects, totaling \$331,994, be funded in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

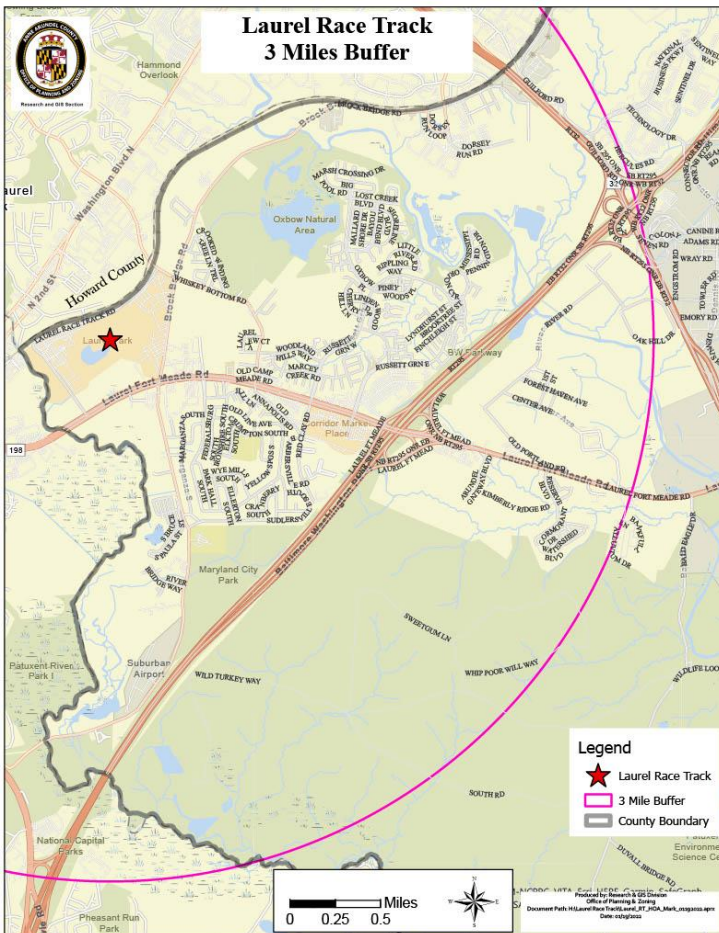
The Committee, appointed by the County Executive, met five times between February 2 and March 22, 2022 to discuss 15 projects submitted by 11 organizations.

The requests totaled \$385,944. After the initial round of discussion, committee members voted to support eight of the 15 projects totaling \$146,644.

A seven-day public comment period, promoted heavily to residents in affected communities, resulted in 97 comments by 86 individuals. Eighty-seven respondents supported projects, whereas 10 were in opposition.

After careful consideration of the application materials, public comment and committee discussion, the LRCIF Advisory Committee recommends to County Executive Pittman that 13 of the 15 projects, totaling \$331,944, be funded in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

These organizations and projects will make a positive impact on the people and communities surrounding Laurel Race Course.



Background

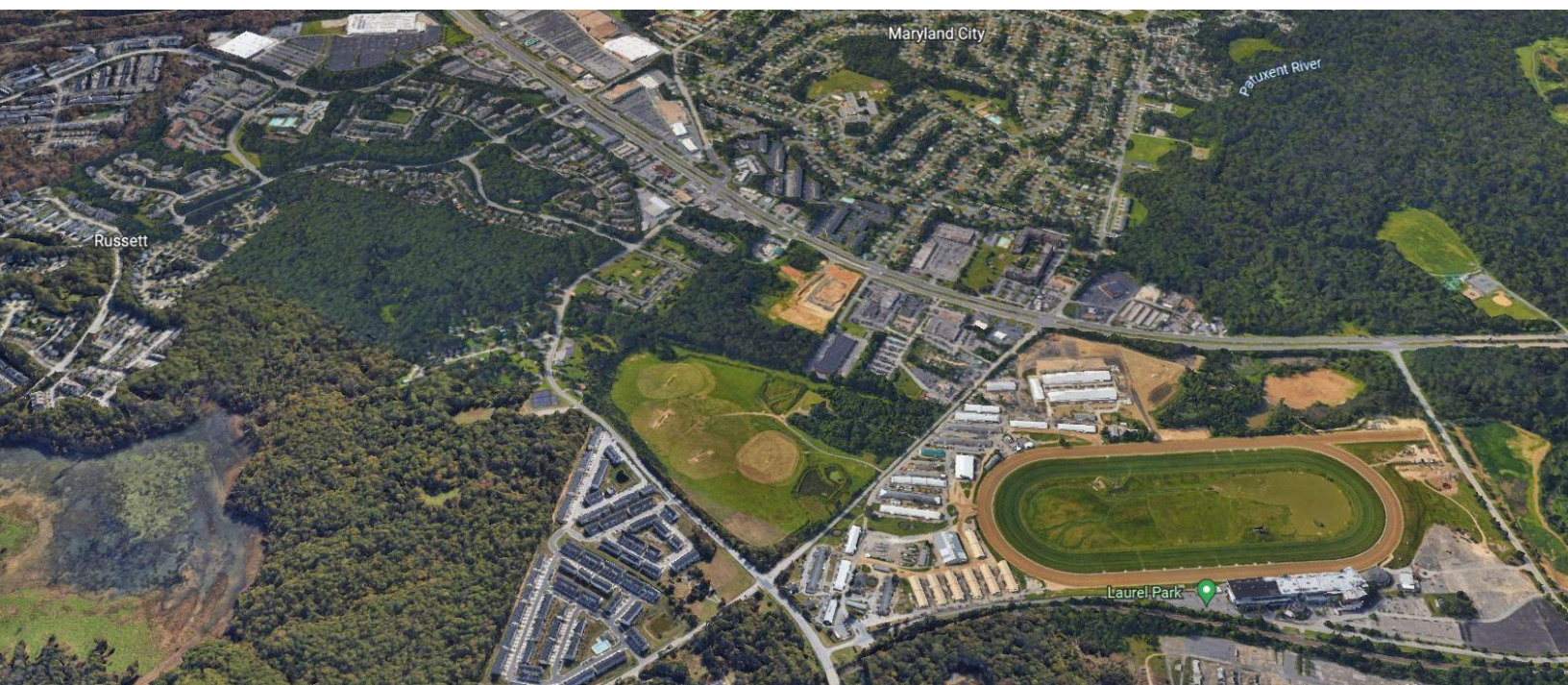
The State of Maryland awards an annual grant of approximately \$357,000 to Anne Arundel County to provide services and facilities within three miles of the Laurel Race Course.

To ensure a transparent, public process for distribution of these funds, County Executive Pittman signed Executive Order (EO) 53 on November 8, 2021, to create the Laurel Race Course Impact Fund (LRCIF) Advisory Committee. This committee, composed of 15 voting members appointed by the County Executive, includes elected officials representing the areas surrounding Laurel Race Course, a diverse group of residents who live in those communities, a representative of Laurel Race Course, and several ex-officio representatives.

The committee selected Julie Hummer to serve as Chair and Yemi Adetola to serve as Vice Chair. Members serve staggered three-year terms to provide continuity.

The committee was charged with administering a public application process and making recommendations to the County Executive by the end of March 2022 for the 2023 fiscal year budget.

For the first time, organizations that provide services in the communities but are headquartered outside the three mile radius were considered for funding. All meetings were open to the public, and public comment was integrated into the formal process.



Application Process

The FY2023 LRCIF Grant Guidelines were distributed on January 26, 2022, to organizations in and around the communities surrounding the Laurel Race Course.

An organization was eligible if it:

- is non-profit, tax-exempt, as defined under section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) of the United States Internal Revenue Code;
- provides a direct service to the residents of Anne Arundel County who reside or work within three miles of the Laurel Race Course;
- is able to comply with all terms, conditions, and certifications of the County's required grant agreement.

Grant funds can be used to purchase equipment and related supplies or to make small capital improvements such as renovation, remodeling, restoration, and beautification of buildings or public community spaces. Funding can be used to expand existing services or pilot test new programs, but shall not be used for general or recurring operating expenses.

The committee looked at the following criteria:

- Program / project is responsive to specific problems or needs of communities in Anne Arundel County within three miles of the Laurel Race Course
- Demonstrated need for the program / project
- Community support for the project.
- Completeness and clarity of the grant application form

The Committee held its initial meeting on February 2, 2022, to meet other committee members, review EO 53 and the Open Meetings Act, and discuss the process and timeline. The Committee asked that the timeline be extended to give organizations more time to prepare applications. The administration agreed and was able to extend the deadline from February 16 to February 28, 2022.

The Committee complied with all Open Meetings Act requirements and made special efforts, after receiving feedback from constituents, to provide more targeted notification.

Following a preliminary review and vote on March 9, the Committee's recommendations and application summaries were posted for public comment between March 10 and March 16, 2022. The summary of applications and public comment are in subsequent sections of this report.

Membership

Community Members

Julie Hummer, Chair

Yemi Adetola

Kassie Cardona

Sheila Catlett

Mark Lowe

Luann Rodrigue

Ray Smallwood

Elected Officials and Laurel Race Course Representative

Delegate Sandy Bartlett

Senator Pam Beidle

Delegate Mark Chang

Councilman Andrew Pruski

Delegate Mike Rogers

Mark Thompson

Ex-Officio Members

Pam Jordan

Lori Rhodes

Ray Szyperski

Chris Trumbauer

Staff

Jennifer Purcell, PhD

Summary of Applications

The Committee received and reviewed 13 applications from 11 organizations ranging in amounts from \$2000 to \$150,000. Two requests were split into two separate projects for a total of 15. Table 1 summarizes the projects.

Table 1: Project Summaries and Funding Requested by Applicants

Organization	Amount Requested	Project Summary	Project Purpose/ Need
Accessible Resources for Independence	\$10,538.00	Outreach program for residents with disabilities	To increase the services accessed by individuals with disabilities in the Laurel area. Only one served last year due to lack of awareness.
African Diaspora Affairs	\$25,000.00	African Heritage Festival	To connect all peoples of African descent to County services.
African Diaspora Affairs	\$5,000	Repatriation Program	To assist in covering the high costs of repatriation for ten African immigrant families.
Brock Bridge Elementary School	\$9,999.00	Community wellness initiative (food and book pantry)	Wellness programs increase student attendance, improve behavior, increase community involvement and remove barriers of access.
Caring Cupboard	\$10,000.00	Shelving for office in Pasadena	Current infrastructure does not meet Food Bank qualifications. Allows for expansion of service.
Caring Cupboard	\$10,000.00	To expand food services in LRT3 area.	To address food insecurity in the communities hardest hit by the pandemic by offering two pop up pantries at two elementary schools.
Leading by Feeding	\$50,000.00	Free Mobile Community Markets	To address food insecurity in an area of high poverty with limited services.
MD City at Russett Library	\$21,500.00	Portable Soundproof Study Room	To provide a private space for conversations, interviews, etc. Increases space without renovation costs.
MD City Communities Association	\$50,000.00	Rt. 198 Beautification (Maintenance, Shrubs, Watering)	Maintenance of the median of Route 198 to remove trash and beautify the space.
MD City Elementary School	\$20,000.00	Garden Space / Outdoor Classroom Revitalization	Provide a safe outdoor space for learning to meet state COMAR requirements.
MD City Elementary School	\$14,762.49	Office Makeover	Provide welcoming atmosphere for parents/residents and boost staff morale.
Monarch Academy	\$2,000.00	Outdoor Sports / Art Program	Address need for wrap around services, combat daily stressors and support early literacy skills.
Monarch Academy	\$3,145.00	Classroom Chairs	2nd grade students identified and advocated for this project to improve the school.
Russett Community Association	\$150,000.00	Security Barrier (2000 ft of 10 ft steel privacy panels)	To decrease vandalism and break-ins in the residential neighborhoods.
Unity Bands	\$4,000.00	Frontline Appreciation Night	To provide a free meal to 100 frontline workers to improve resiliency and show support.



After the initial round of discussion, committee members voted to support eight of the 15 projects totaling \$146,644 of the initial \$385,944 requested. Two projects were approved contingent on conditions being met.

It should be noted that funds allocated by the State do not need to be spent in their entirety each year. Unspent funds roll over to the following year and can be banked to support larger projects in the future.

Overarching concerns included how the committee will ensure funds are spent within the 3 mile radius, the number of constituents who will benefit, and to what level past financial reports should be considered in deciding award amounts.

Several members requested that organizations be given the opportunity to present to the committee. This step was not possible for FY23 due to the compressed timeline, but may be considered in future years.

Summary of Public Comment

The Committee invited all County residents to provide public comment on their preliminary recommendations. Special weight was given to those living or working within three miles of Laurel Race Course.

The public comment period was March 10, 2022, to March 16, 2022, and participants submitted comments through an online form. The committee reviewed a total of 97 public comments from 86 individuals. Six respondents resided outside of the Laurel communities but were familiar with the organizations. Not all respondents included narrative feedback.

The Russett Wall project garnered the most feedback with 41 responses and five pages of comments. All unedited comments are available at aacounty.org/lrcif. Table 2 lists the number of respondents in support or opposition of each project.

“Giving the students a voice in the needs of their school is powerful. They deserve to see this come to fruition.”

Table 2: Public Support or Opposition of Projects

Organization	Project	# Public Support	# Public Oppose
Accessible Resources for Independence	Outreach program for residents with disabilities	3	0
African Diaspora Affairs	African Heritage Festival	7	1
African Diaspora Affairs	Repatriation Program	1	1
Brock Bridge Elem School	Community Wellness Initiative	8	0
Caring Cupboard	Shelving	0	0
Caring Cupboard	Expand food services	2	0
Leading by Feeding	Mobile Community Markets	2	0
MD City at Russett Library	Soundproof Study Room	4	1
MD City Communities Association	Rt. 198 Beautification	5	0
MD City Elem School	Garden Space / Outdoor Classroom Revitalization	1	0
MD City Elem School	Office Makeover	1	1
Monarch Academy	Outdoor Sports / Art	9	0
Monarch Academy	Classroom Chairs	7	0
Russett Community Association	Security Barrier	35	6
Unity Bands	Frontline Appreciation Night	2	0

“I work at Brock Bridge and am in support of the initiative. I see our students daily and see a need for support for wellness in the community. Many of our students are from low income families and need help with obtaining enough food for their families.”

“For nearly a decade, the RCA Board and residents have been requesting assistance from the County to resolve the major issues along the ‘hotel corridor’ with no significant results.”

“This library is such an asset to this community. An improvement like this would be wonderful and extend so many options for how the community could use the space.”



Final Recommendations

After careful consideration of the application materials, public comment and committee discussion, the LRCIF Advisory Committee respectfully recommends to County Executive Pittman that 13 of the 15 projects, totaling \$321,406, be funded in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

These organizations and projects will make a positive impact on the communities surrounding Laurel Race Course.

Accessible Resources for Independence Outreach Program	\$ 10,538
African Diaspora Affairs Heritage Festival	\$ 25,000
African Diaspora Affairs Repatriation Program	\$ 5,000
Brock Bridge Elementary School Community Wellness Initiative	\$ 9,999
Caring Cupboard Expansion of Food Services	\$ 10,000
Leading by Feeding Free Mobile Community Markets	\$ 10,000
MD City at Russett Library Portable Soundproof Study Room	\$ 21,500
MD City Communities Association Rt. 198 Beautification Program	\$ 50,000
MD City Elementary School Outdoor Classroom Revitalization	\$ 20,000
MD City Elementary School Office Makeover	\$ 14,762
Monarch Academy Outdoor Sports / Art program	\$ 2,000
Monarch Academy Classroom Chairs	\$ 3,145
Russett Community Association Security Barrier	\$150,000

TOTAL	\$331,944
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