



Budget Advocacy Webinar

Presented by James Kitchin

December 18, 2024

Created by Hannah Thompson

**District 1 with
Councilmember Smith**

January 29, 2025

North County High School Cafeteria

**District 2 with
Councilmember Pickard**

January 9, 2025

Severn Run High School Auditorium

**District 3 with
Councilmember Volke**

January 14, 2025

Chesapeake High School Cafeteria

**District 4 with
Councilmember Hummer**

January 30, 2025

Arundel High School Cafeteria

**District 5 with
Councilmember Fiedler**

January 16, 2025

Severna Park High School Cafeteria

**District 6 with
Councilmember Rodvien**

February 4, 2025

Annapolis High School Cafeteria

**District 7 with
Councilmember Leadbetter**

January 23, 2025

Southern High School Auditorium

**County-Wide
Spanish Language Town Hall**

February 5, 2025

Virtual on Zoom

FY26 Budget Town Halls

Join County Executive Pittman and your Councilmember to share your priorities for the next county budget.



Provide Input

To provide transparency and include community engagement in the county's budget process, County Executive Pittman will once again host 8 Budget Town Hall meetings across the county. This is your opportunity to share your priorities for the next county budget with county leaders.

Please register to join us by using the link for your district's town hall below. Residents in attendance will have the opportunity to provide public testimony for two minutes about what they would like funded in the county budget. For those who cannot attend in person, all town halls will be streamed live to facebook.com/aacoexec where you will be able to watch during and after the meeting, and provide written comments via email to budget-comments@aacounty.org.

[SUBMIT COMMENTS](#)

[BUDGET TESTIMONY TOOLKIT](#)

[YOUR BUDGET](#)



[SUBMIT COMMENTS](#)

[BUDGET TESTIMONY TOOLKIT](#)

[YOUR BUDGET](#)

Town Hall Dates / Locations

District 1

January 29, 2025

[North County High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



Peter Smith
Councilmember

[REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 1 TOWN HALL EVENT](#)

District 2

January 9, 2025

[Severn Run High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



Allison Pickard
Councilmember

[REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 2 TOWN HALL EVENT](#)

District 3

January 14, 2025

[Chesapeake High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



Nathan Volke
Councilmember

[REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 3 TOWN HALL EVENT](#)

District 4

January 30, 2025

[Arundel High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



Julie Hummer
Councilmember

[REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 4 TOWN HALL EVENT](#)

aaconomy.org/budget-town-halls



Peter Smith
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 1
TOWN HALL EVENT



Allison Pickard
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 2
TOWN HALL EVENT



Nathan Volke
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 3
TOWN HALL EVENT



Julie Hummer
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 4
TOWN HALL EVENT



District 5

January 16, 2025

[Severna Park High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



Amanda Fiedler
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 5
TOWN HALL EVENT

District 6

February 4, 2025

[Annapolis High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



Lisa Rodvien
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 6
TOWN HALL EVENT

District 7

January 23, 2025

[Southern High School](#)

🕒 6pm - 8pm



**Shannon
Leadbetter**
Councilmember

REGISTER FOR DISTRICT 7
TOWN HALL EVENT

County-wide

Wednesday, February 5

Virtual Event

🕒 6pm - 8pm

**SPANISH LANGUAGE
TOWN HALL**

REGISTER FOR VIRTUAL
EVENT

WHO IS MY COUNCILMEMBER?

FY26 Budget Town Halls

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SUBMIT COMMENTS

BUDGET TESTIMONY TOOLKIT

YOUR BUDGET

Your Budget Toolkit Contains:

- A **Budget Testimony Checklist** to help guide you in drafting your testimony, and ensure that you are maximizing your opportunity to participate in the process.
- **Town Hall Flyer PDFs** to distribute to other community members or post to social media to assist you're organizing efforts
- **A copy of this presentation & webinar** for reference
- A **Resource Guide** full of links to Planning Documents, Reports, Studies, Needs Assessments and Data that can be used to research and substantiate your testimony

1. Register

2. Research

3. Organize

4. Edit

CECS Budget Testimony Checklist

1. REGISTER

- Register to testify by following the links at aaccounty.org/budget-town-halls and/or Email a written submission of your testimony to budgetcomments@aaccounty.org

2. RESEARCH

- Make sure your testimony is under County jurisdiction.
- Check your Budget Toolkit for verified supporting documents and data.
- Email CECS@aaccounty.org if you have any questions!

3. ORGANIZE

- Build a coalition of Anne Arundel residents and community members and encourage them to testify in person and/or by submitting written testimony online.
- Coordinate your testimony with your community to ensure a united message.

4. EDIT

- Is the objective of my testimony clearly and concisely stated?
- Does my testimony cite credible research?
- Who stands to benefit from my testimony?
- How feasible is my objective?



Register: The Different Types of Testimony

Submission Type	Pros and Cons
Budget Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unique opportunity to address the County Executive, your Council Representative, department leaders, and community advocates in the same room• Allows for an opportunity to follow up with other attendees and build connections• Recorded, and broadcast live on Arundel TV• Testimony is limited to 2 minutes
Email budget-comments@aacounty.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most efficient way to distribute information quickly to coalition members, and duplicate testimony• Not time limited- allows for a longer form case to be made• Can directly link sources• Is less public
Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If time is limited at a Budget Town Hall, written testimony is collected and then logged by County staff

Research

Substantiate Your Testimony

Use credible sources that are affiliated with local, state or federal government, or academic institutions. Make sure to cite your research, and when submitting email testimony, to budgetcomments@aacounty.com, **attach links or files** to your email. *Your **Budget Toolkit** includes almost 100 sources of data, planning documents and needs assessments to assist you in your research.*

The more specific, the better! **Recently published** documents, and **documents authored by County Departments and Agencies** will make for the most relevant sources.

Email CECS@aacounty.org if you have questions!

Example 1:

I work for a non-profit that provides community health services. We currently provide free flu shots for 200 individuals per week. We are facing a steep decline in revenue due to the end of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, that may jeopardize our ability to provide these services.

Example 2:

My street floods when it rains ever since a new development was built nearby on higher elevation.

Organize

Build a coalition of Anne Arundel residents and community members and encourage them to testify in person and/or by submitting written testimony online. Our County leaders and decision makers are looking for **trends among testimony to demonstrate a diverse coalition of support**. It's important that our Budget reflects the values and priorities of communities, and the county as a whole.



Attend and/or host meetings around the topic of your testimony with other stakeholders to establish and strengthen a coalition of support.

Utilize community gathering spaces and organizations, as well as County Public Input Meetings

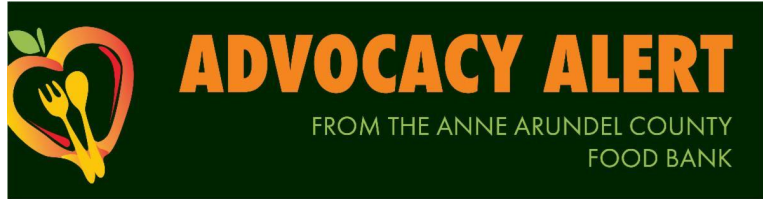


Draft your testimony via email and distribute it to community members with instructions on how to replicate your testimony and submit it.

Utilize community organizations, word of mouth, and social media to get the word out



A consistent presence at the town halls and in County inboxes is the best way for a community to have its voice heard in the budget process



(Continued)

To assist you in the crafting of your message, below are several informational bullet points that may be helpful. Please feel free to personalize your message. Stories of lived experience can offer a particularly powerful perspective to our elected officials.

Dear Anne Arundel County Food Bank Friends and Supporters,

I hope that you had a very happy and joyful holiday season and that 2024 is off to a great start. At the Anne Arundel County Food Bank now is the time when we transition out of the holiday season into another very important time of year – County Budget season. I am writing today to request that you take action to help us secure funding from Anne Arundel County to support the essential work of the Food Bank.

Over the past four years, the pandemic-era, Federal funding made its way to Anne Arundel County and the Anne Arundel County Food Bank through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). We received an average of \$1.3 million each year to help maintain and expand our food purchases and distributions as well as support our warehouse operations. ARPA funding has been discontinued, but the high need for supplemental food resources in our community remains. Without support from the County, the Food Bank faces the possibility of a significant budgetary funding gap. With this in mind, we are making a specific request to the Office of the County Executive to invest \$1.5 Million of Fiscal Year 2025 County resources to support our County-wide food access efforts. Your advocacy on our behalf will go a long way towards ensuring that we can continue to serve our neighbors in need throughout Anne Arundel County, providing nourishing food and other essential resources when and where they are needed most.

One critical way that you can take action on behalf of the Anne Arundel County Food Bank is to attend one of the eight budget hearings and testify to the positive impact that the work of the Food Bank has on you, your immediate community, and/or the County as a whole. Hearings will take place in January and February 2024. **Identify your district** and **sign up to testify** at one of the budget listening sessions. If you prefer, you may also submit written testimony to budget-comments@aacounty.org.

Whether spoken or written, your words will send a powerful message that the work of the Anne Arundel County Food Bank serves a vital need, and that as a caring community we must invest our resources in the alleviation of food insecurity and the well-being of all our residents.

- According to the most recent ALICE Report, of the 212,687 Anne Arundel County households, 35% (74,440) are below the ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed) threshold. Twenty-eight percent are, however, deemed to be above the federal poverty line and therefore may not qualify for federal assistance programs, including SNAP benefits.
- As a result of increasing housing costs, fluctuating food prices, and the end of the expanded Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, requests for emergency food assistance remain higher than they were before the pandemic and show no sign of abating.
- Currently, the Anne Arundel County Food Bank is providing an average of 48,000 instances of service every month.
- Nourishing food provided free of any charge ensures that families don't have to choose between eating and paying the rent, heating their homes, paying for prescription medicines, or any number of other survival essentials.
- Dedicated County funding for food access ensures that our under-resourced neighbors can access lean proteins and fresh produce as well as shelf-stable food items. Not only do these fresh, more nutritional food options help to determine better health outcomes, but also, they allow families to prepare meals that align with their cultural preferences and traditions.

If you register to testify, please let us know by emailing communications@aafoodbank.org. We will have an organizational representative at each Town Hall and will reach out to you before the event to determine a meeting spot and arrange to sit together. And, of course, please reach out to us with any questions that you may have.

Thank you for all that you do to support the Anne Arundel County Food Bank, especially any advocacy that you can provide on our behalf at this critical moment. We are grateful for your partnership. Taking action together, we can ensure that all of our neighbors have access to the fundamental resources that they need to survive and thrive.

Edit and Review

Helpful questions to ask yourself before submitting testimony

As County Executive, Steuart has pledged to make Anne Arundel County “The Best Place - For All,” by “Putting Communities First.” His strategy is to engage communities from every sector and to practice transparency and data-driven policymaking.

- ▶ **Is the objective of my testimony clearly and concisely stated?**
- ▶ **Does my testimony cite credible research or personal experiences?**
- ▶ **Who stands to benefit from my testimony?**
- ▶ **How feasible is my objective?**

Is the objective of my testimony clearly and concisely stated?

“We must make conservative assumptions about future revenues and set ourselves up for future economic challenges, while also investing in progress... so that our children, our families, our environment, and our institutions will thrive for many years to come.”

County Executive Steuart Pittman

▶ Testimony will be analyzed in large part based on trends in categories and departments they fall under.

▶ **Example**

If you're concerned about crime in your neighborhood, you might consider:

- General testimony, asking for public safety be prioritized and reflected in the investments of the budget based on recommendations by County Officials and subject matter experts
- Testifying to increase Public Safety Resources in your specific area
- Investments in Gun Violence Intervention, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Any specific programs or planning recommendations that you believe would help achieve the goal of crime reduction in your neighborhood

Does my testimony cite credible research or personal experiences?

“Fiscal discipline means having a funding source for whatever you plan to spend”

*County Executive Stuart
Pittman*



Most of the time, if there’s an infrastructure issue or a community need, like a food desert, those things will have been studied and documented. Budget testimony helps County decision makers gain a better and more specific understanding of where to put resources.



Example

Testimony regarding traffic improvements can be substantiated by County transportation plans and assessments, and publicly available accident data like VisionZero.

Who stands to benefit from my testimony?

“There is a lens through which I view each request. First, it must improve delivery of a service to even be considered. If it does, I ask myself if it’s a service that improves the quality of peoples’ lives? How many lives? How much improvement? Is there an alternative way to deliver that same improvement? What is the impact on people if we don’t fund the request?”

County Executive Steuart Pittman

▶ All of the County’s 600,000 residents have to be considered when making budgetary decisions. It is impossible to meet the needs or the asks of every resident and community, but initiatives that serve to help the most amount of people, and have the largest and most diverse demonstration of support, will be prioritized.

▶ Example: “I would like the county to build a park in my neighborhood”

versus

“Myself and all of my neighbors who are here tonight would like the county to invest in a park in our neighborhood, which would benefit all 29,358 (ACS 2022) residents that live there.”

How feasible is my objective?



Everything in the Budget is presented by the County Executive and approved by the County Council. It's helpful to keep in mind their policy goals and principles as guidelines for what they're likely to support



Look at similar projects or initiatives to gain a sense of the fiscal impact of your testimony

“One of the greatest challenges faced by local governments today is recruiting and retaining the quality public servants that it takes to deliver the services that communities need.”

County Executive Stuart Pittman










Anne Arundel County provides a multitude of services for its citizens in addition to maintaining equipment, buildings, and infrastructure. These have real costs that need to be considered in the budget process and adjusted as the needs of the county change.

Listed below are the average costs for a sampling of county services (these costs are estimates and include fringe benefits such as healthcare).

Workforce

Position	Average Cost (\$)
 Construction Inspector	112,000
 Public Works Engineer	150,000
 Fire Fighter	97,000
 Police Officer	106,000
 Program Manager	147,000
 Psychologists/Social Worker	122,700
 School Counselor	116,800
 Teacher	82,800
 Zoning Inspector	103,000

Infrastructure, Operations, & Equipment

Item	Average Cost (\$)
 Ambulance	424,000
 Fire Ladder Truck	1,900,000
 Fire Engine	750,000
 Polling Place	24,500
 Senior Center Operations	630,000
 School Health Room Staffing Cost	115,000
 New High School	170,000,000
 New Middle School	100,000,000
 New Elementary School	50,000,000



Thank you for coming to our Budget Advocacy Webinar

<https://www.aacounty.org/openarundel/yourbudget/budget-toolkit>