

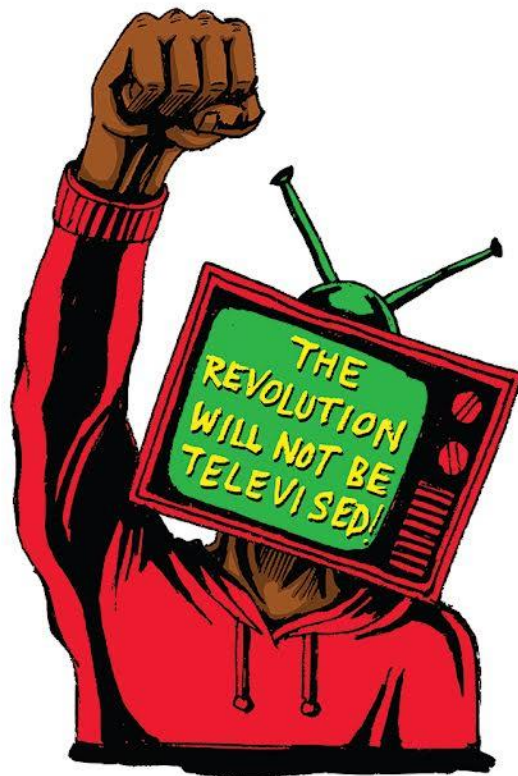
Black Advancement Inc.

Presents:

Local Political

Awareness:

**How To Be an Active & Impactful
Citizen in Your Community**



1st Edition

September 2023

FOREWORD

ENGAGE & ADVANCE

The Black Advancement Inc. is a non-profit organization that seeks to combat problems in the Black Community through discussion and action. We call these actions “Solutions”. One problem we know that has an outsized effect on the Black Community is the ability to affect policies that impact their lives. To combat this issue for our target base and any of the interested parties, we developed a political primer – entitled Local Political Awareness: ‘How To Be an Active & Impactful Citizen In Your Community.’

The purpose of this political primer is to activate and enable the reader to better understand who their local representatives are, their responsibilities, and how they impact the everyday life of citizens. We hope by showing the complexity of the local government system in a simplified way, it will spur action and engagement.

Peace and Advance!!!

Agyemang Asante Goodman

Founder & President of Black Advancement Inc.

LOCAL POLITICAL AWARENESS

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Overview and Purpose



This booklet was created in response to a solution Black Advancement Inc. conceived and developed during an internal meeting that we dubbed “Solution Sessions.” When thinking of concepts that would assist everyday people, particularly Black people, with the myriad of issues life can bring, the CORE group thought about the importance of politics. Using the maxim of all politics is local, we decided to address issues within the Black Community by working to promote a better understanding of how the political process operates, and which official is responsible for specific functions. To combat the problem of a lack of knowledge and interest, the CORE group decided to create a simplified booklet with the intent to explain how local governments are organized, function, and the responsibilities tied to the positions.

For this primer we will use our local government, Frederick, MD, as an exemplar for local governments. We review the local government structure, provide the designations and responsibility of specific positions as these can vary depending on location. We hope you find the content in this pamphlet useful and applicable. If you find this program to be helpful, you are obligated to share it.

Below we reveal what the local governments at the *state*, *county*, and *city* levels provide for the citizens, using *Frederick, Maryland* as the model.



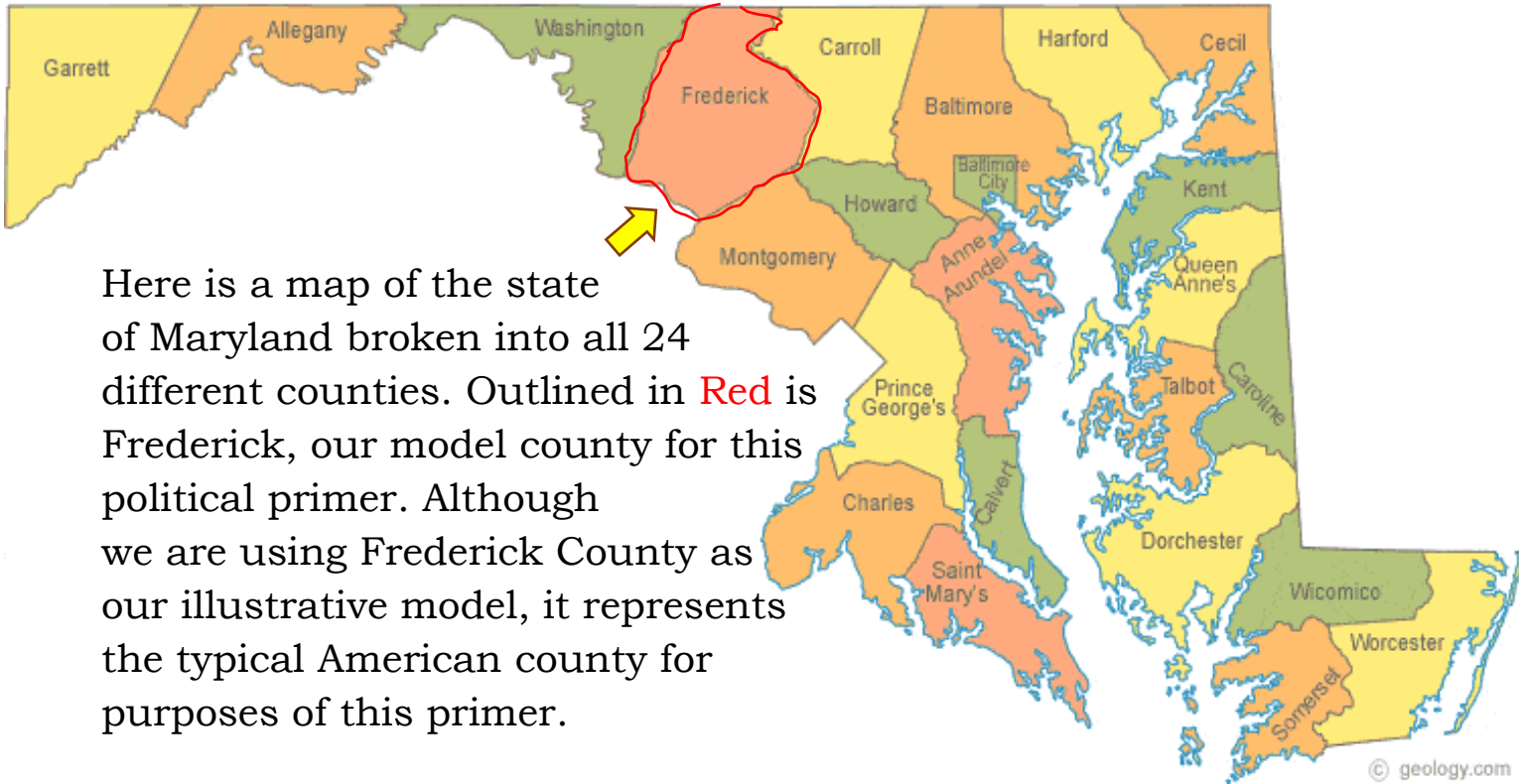
Maryland State Delegates



Local governments generally include two tiers: *counties*, also known as boroughs in Alaska and parishes in Louisiana, and, or cities/towns. In some States, counties are divided into townships. Municipalities can be structured in many ways, as defined by State constitutions, and are called, variously, townships, villages, boroughs, cities, or towns. Various kinds of districts also provide functions in local government outside county or municipal boundaries, such as school districts or fire protection districts. Whereas the Federal Government and State governments share power in countless ways, a local government must be granted power by the State. In general, mayors, city councils, and other governing bodies are directly elected by the people.

Municipal Governments are generally organized around a population center and in most cases correspond to the geographical designations used by the United States Census Bureau for reporting of housing and population statistics. For example, Walkersville, Thurmont, Brunswick, and Middletown are separate cities within Frederick County. Each is within a district that has representation in the Maryland House of Delegates and the Maryland State Senate.

The Maryland House of Delegates is the lower chamber of the Maryland General Assembly. Alongside the Maryland State Senate, it forms the legislative branch of the Maryland state government and works with the governor to create laws and establish a state budget.



Here is a map of the state of Maryland broken into all 24 different counties. Outlined in Red is Frederick, our model county for this political primer. Although we are using Frederick County as our illustrative model, it represents the typical American county for purposes of this primer.

Some of the titles of the officials may differ but the responsibilities are the same. For example, Maryland has a State Delegation while California has a State Assembly. Both bodies share the same responsibilities as members of the lower house of government. The most common name utilized for this legislative function in the United States is the "House of Representatives" for their state houses, with Maryland and California being two of the eight states that use a different name for the lower house.



The Frederick County Government



Executive Branch:

The County Executive is the Chief Executive Officer of the Frederick County Government who directs, supervises and oversees Frederick County Government departments and agencies, establishes policies and proposes the budget. The County Executive serves a four-year term and not more than two consecutive terms. The salary is \$137,000 plus benefits.

Legislative Branch:

Local governments involve citizens and interest groups in the policymaking process in a variety of ways, such as public comment periods during regular meetings and special neighborhood meetings on issues affecting that neighborhood. But in the end, legislative bodies make the decisions and voters must abide by these decisions. Those who are not satisfied with the outcome can always seek to change their representative by voting for a new candidate.

Local legislative authority is generally limited to what the state specifically grants to counties, cities, and towns. However, code cities, charter cities, and charter counties have more extensive powers called "home rule" that permit them to exercise authority not specifically granted, provided that the state has not specifically prohibited that local authority.

The Legislative Branch of Frederick County is headed by the Council President and consists of a seven-member County Council (including the President) with five members elected by district and two elected at-large. Council members have the power to initiate legislation, however the Council meetings are limited to 45 days yearly and non-legislative sessions as needed. County Council members serve for four years and no more than three consecutive terms and receive \$35,000 per year with no benefits.



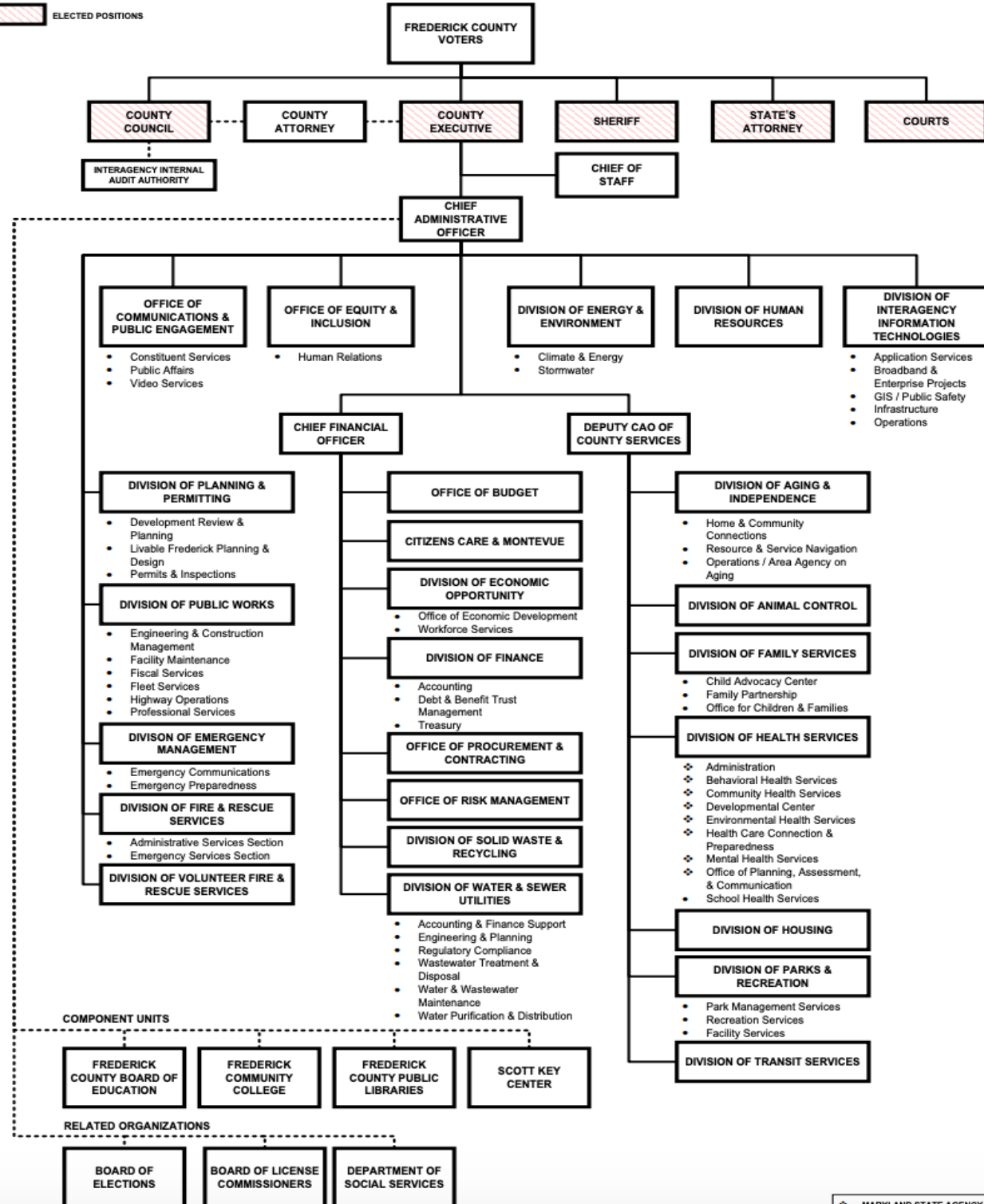
Frederick County Positions



July 11, 2023

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

ELECTED POSITIONS





Frederick City Government



Background:

In the mayor-council form of government, the mayor is the chief administrative officer who is responsible for all administrative functions. Some mayor-council cities have also hired a professional city administrator or chief administrative officer to serve under the mayor and take responsibility for many administrative duties. In the council-manager form, the appointed manager is the chief administrative officer. In Frederick city, the mayor maintains the responsibility for all administrative functions.

The City of Frederick encompasses a wide range of property stretching as far east as the Monocacy River, west to the base of Braddock Mountain, north into rich valley farmland, and south bordering Interstate Route 70, the little market town platted on the classic urban grid in 1745 has engulfed prehistoric Native American riverside sites, eighteenth and nineteenth century farmsteads, fields, and meadows, and replaced them with geometric patterns of roads, houses, and commercial/industrial development. Despite this expansion, historic Frederick retains its market town feel, still a destination in the center of the largest county in Maryland. The city's leadership consist of the mayor and the city Aldermen.

Office of the Mayor:

The Office of the Mayor provides leadership in the formulation of public policies to meet the community's needs. The mayor and professional staff create and communicate a vision and

management structure that enables all departments and employees of the city of Frederick to effectively serve its citizens. The mayor has an overall responsibility to establish policies and proposes the budget for the city.

Common responsibilities for a mayor include: Attending public and closed aldermanic meetings and proposing and debating initiatives. Casting votes, potentially in a tie-breaking capacity, at town council meetings. Speaking with constituents at meetings, their office or in public, answering questions and listening to concerns.

The Board of Aldermen:

The City of Frederick, founded in 1745, and incorporated as a municipal corporation in 1817, is a democratic form of government where the mayor serves as the chief executive officer (CEO) and the Board of Aldermen serves as the legislative body. The election for these positions are held every four years. Other terms used in the United States for an alderman is "councilman" or "council member."

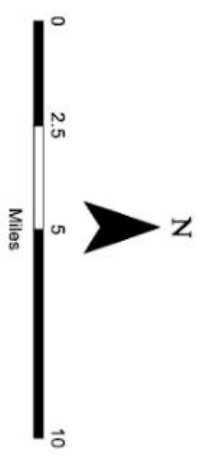
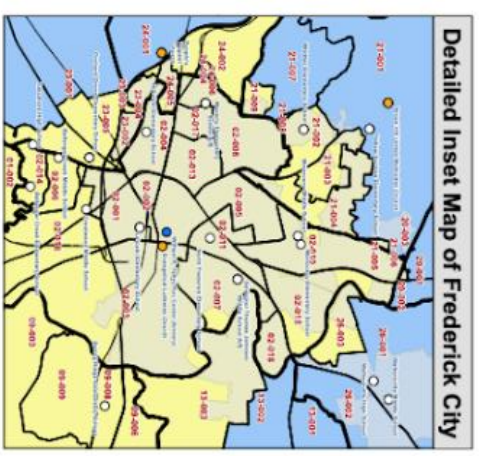
In addition to working with fellow aldermen to hash out issues including zoning and other matters of city policy, aldermen often serve on committees that work on larger projects. For instance, let's say someone brought up the idea to build a youth center in your community. The first step in the process before ever breaking ground on the project would be to form a group to design a plan. Aldermen are appointed to head each of these committees. Aldermen might do research on some of the related issues, talk to representatives from other cities that have undertaken similar projects and discuss concerns with residents who might be affected by the construction of a new youth center.

2022 Legislative Subdistricts, Election Districts and Precincts



Frederick County, Maryland
 Board of Elections
 May 31, 2023
 Frederick County GIS

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Legislative Districts | Election Polling Places |
| 02A | Church |
| 03 | Club |
| 04 | Community Center |
| 05 | Library |
| | Recreation Center |
| | School |
| Election Precinct | |
| Election District | |
| Municipalities | |
| Interstate/Highway | |
| State Route | |
| Roads | |

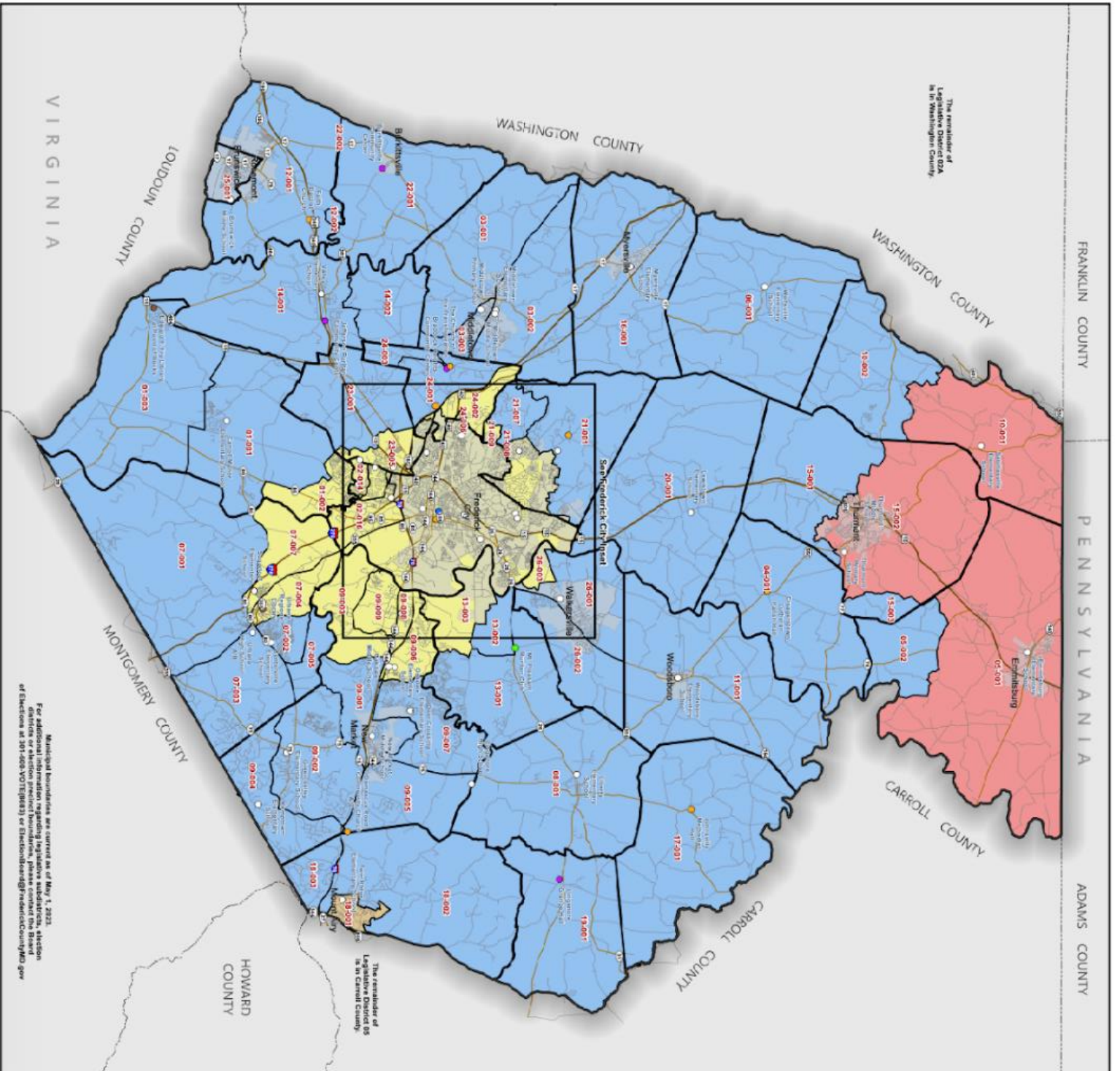


FREDERICK COUNTY GIS

Projection: NAD 1983 State Plane Maryland FIPS 5000 Feet

What's shown here has been made to ensure the accuracy of this map. Frederick County accepts no liability or responsibility for errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the content of this map. The user assumes all responsibility for the use of this map. The content is provided only and should not be used for anything, especially, or otherwise, without the written consent of Frederick County.

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VIRGINIA

FRANKLIN COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA

ADAMS COUNTY

LOUDOUN COUNTY

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

HOWARD COUNTY

WASHINGTON COUNTY

WASHINGTON COUNTY

CARROLL COUNTY

CARROLL COUNTY



The Frederick County Public School (FCPS) District's mission is to inspire, innovate & motivate. FCPS serves more than 45,000 students and 280,000 residents in twelve municipalities spread across 667 square miles.

FCPS is led by a superintendent, who oversees several important tasks including hiring staff, managing budgets, monitoring student success, and developing a vision for the school district.

While charged with being the leader, the superintendent acts as an adviser to the Board of Education (BOE) in establishing its priorities. He or she identifies the current needs of the district, suggests a process, supplies information to the board, makes recommendations and develops strategies for implementing the priorities.

BOE Policy Committee identifies a process for development of policies and amendments to serve as guidelines for the operation of the school system and the successful, efficient function of the public schools. The BOE in Frederick consists of a President, Vice President, five Board members and one Student Board Member representing the perspective of students throughout the county.

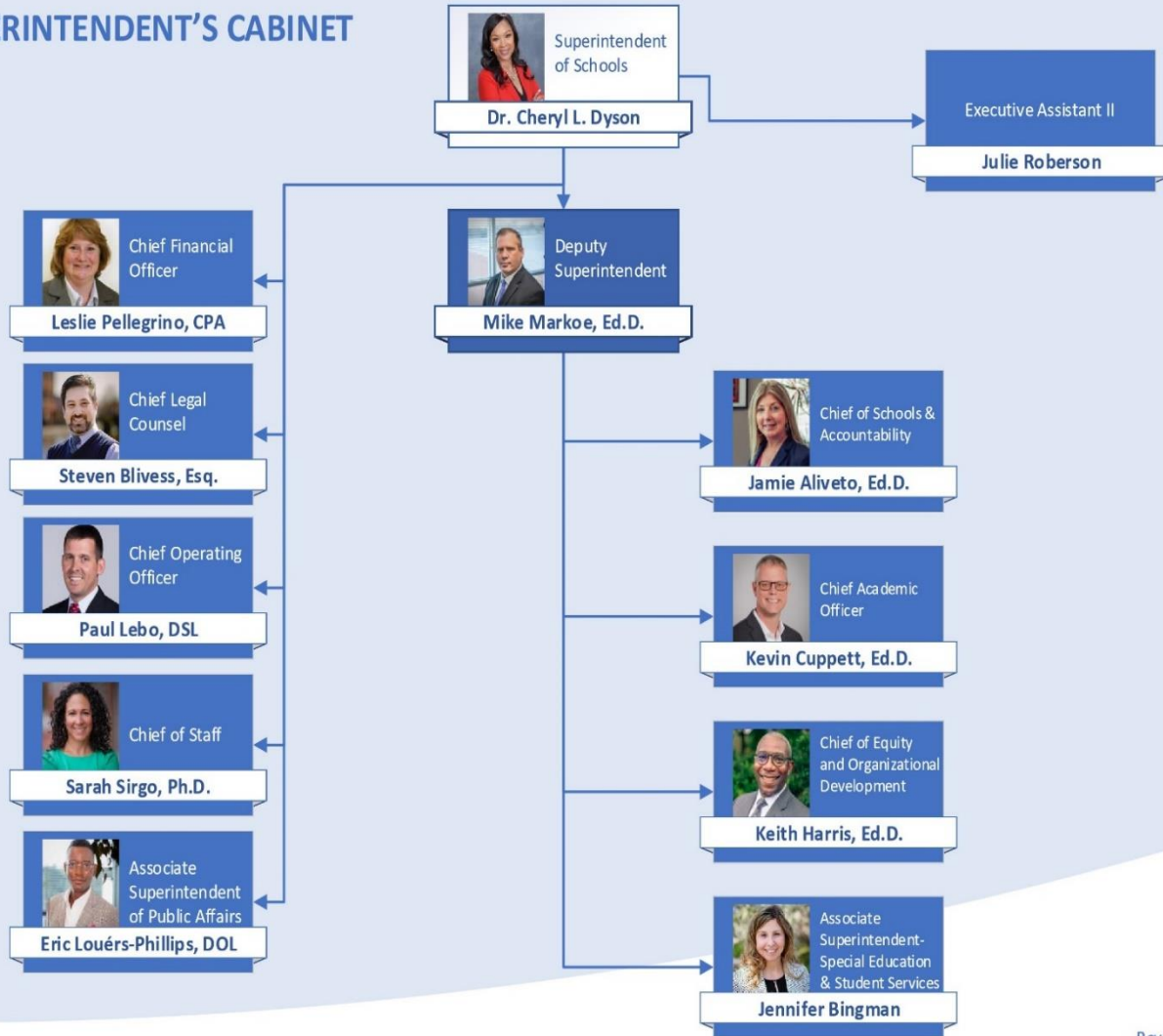
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sue Johnson, President
 Dean Rose, Vice President
 Cheryl L. Dyson, Secretary
 Nancy Allen
 David Bass
 Rae Gallagher

Jason "Mr. J" Johnson
 Karen Yoho
 Brooke Lieberman, Student Member
 Kathryn Rich, Executive Assistant II



SUPERINTENDENT'S CABINET



Revised 7.1.23/df



Maryland Judicial Branch



The Judicial Branch is responsible for the resolution of all matters involving civil and criminal law in the State of Maryland. Judges base their decisions on statutory law, common law, or equity.

Maryland has a four-tiered court system consisting of the District Court of Maryland, Circuit Courts, the Appellate Court of Maryland, and the Supreme Court of Maryland.

District Court of Maryland:

The District Court of Maryland was created in 1971 on a statewide basis in each county and Baltimore City. As a court of jurisdiction, it replaced local justices of the peace and county trial magistrates. District Courts have jurisdiction in minor civil and criminal matters and in virtually all violations of the Motor Vehicle Law. District Court judges are appointed by the Governor for ten-year terms.

Circuit Courts:

A Circuit Court resides in each county and in Baltimore City. The Circuit Court has original jurisdiction over more serious criminal and civil cases and also hears appeals from decisions in the District Court. Circuit Court judges are nominated by special judicial selection commissions and appointed by the Governor, or they may be elected by the voters. At the first statewide election occurring at least one year after their

appointment, Circuit Court judges must successfully stand for election to continue in office for a term of fifteen years.

Appellate Court of Maryland:

The Appellate Court of Maryland is the second highest court in the state. It was established in 1966 to ease the caseload of the former Court of Appeals and to facilitate resolution of cases requiring appellate adjudication. The Appellate Court has exclusive initial appellate jurisdiction over any reviewable judgment, decree, order, or other action of a circuit court, except for appeals in criminal cases in which the death penalty is imposed. The thirteen judges of the Appellate Court are appointed by the Governor with Senate consent for ten-year terms, subject to approval of the voters at the next election after their appointment.

Supreme Court of Maryland:

The Supreme Court of Maryland has a long history in Maryland, dating from the seventeenth century and reformed by the first State constitution of 1776. As Maryland's highest court, the Supreme Court reviews cases of major importance where the decisions rendered are based on constitutional interpretation of the law. The seven justices of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Governor with Senate consent. They serve ten-year terms. Like judges of the Appellate Court, justices of the Supreme Court must win approval of the electorate at the first election occurring at least one year after their appointment.



Black Advancement Inc. Goals & Purposes



The goal for this Black Advancement Primer is two-fold. The first is to improve the public's understanding of the importance of local government and how it impacts our everyday lives. Too often citizens get caught up in national politics, which are no doubt important, however when it comes to the implementation of laws that directly impact you, those are made on the local level.

The second objective is to use this newfound knowledge and understanding of how the system works and to put it into action for the Black Community. This can be accomplished through letter writing campaigns, attending local government meetings when open to the public, and marshalling a voter block behind a specific issue. As necessary, coalescing to pool votes for candidates that listen to and act upon our demands while ensuring accountability after they are in office.

Although this “Local Political Awareness” primer has been created by Black Advancement Inc., we fully expect everyone who reads this booklet to contribute to it. This is the 1st edition, and we know that we didn't capture everything on the first go around. So, if you desire to add to this booklet or have comments on how we can improve upon this booklet or our other programs please address them to the Black Advancement Inc. website www.blackadvancement.com or email us at blackadvancement@gmail.com.

Peace & Advance!!!

