

# State Of Maryland

## 2024 Bond Initiative Fact Sheet

<b>1. Name Of Project</b>		
Discovery Center at Water's Edge		
<b>2. Senate Sponsor</b>	<b>3. House Sponsor</b>	
James	S. Johnson	
<b>4. Jurisdiction</b> (County or Baltimore City)	<b>5. Requested Amount</b>	
Harford County	\$440,000	
<b>6. Purpose of Bond Initiative</b>		
the acquisition, planning, design, construction, repair, renovation, reconstruction, site improvement, and capital equipping of Phase 2 of the Discovery Center at Water's Edge expansion		
<b>7. Matching Fund</b>		
Requirements:	Type:	
Grant		
<b>8. Special Provisions</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Historical Easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Sectarian	
<b>9. Contact Name and Title</b>	<b>Contact Ph#</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Delegate Steve Johnson		steve.johnson@house.state.md.us
Charlie Nietubicz		443-621-8342
<b>10. Description and Purpose of Organization</b> (Limit length to visible area)		
<p>The Discovery Center at Water's Edge is a regional science, technology, and heritage center on Route 40 in Belcamp, Maryland, where visitors can explore, invent, and play with science and technology. Thanks to the close proximity of APG, visitors to the Discovery Center can see tomorrow's technology today and engage with the scientists inventing it. Our goal is a free-standing 35,000-SF science and technology-focused community center overlooking Bush River with indoor and outdoor classrooms that attracts over 200,000 visitors per year. The project is being developed in three phases. In November 2023, we opened Phase 1, a 5,000-SF preview center, with exhibits, classrooms, and a maker space. Since its November grand opening, thousands of people have visited the facility, which is already at full capacity. This funding request is for Phase 2 construction.</p>		

**11. Description and Purpose of Project** (Limit length to visible area)

Science centers across the country act as tourism and economic drivers for the communities in which they are located. For every \$100 of economic activity created by a science center, an additional \$220 is generated. With the state's assistance, the Discovery Center at Water's Edge will be this economic driver. This bond bill supports key components of expanding the Discovery Center's footprint to 10,000-SF, a necessary milestone for being self-sustaining. The Phase 2 facility will serve over 100,000 visitors per year with additional exhibits, outdoor experiences, and assistive technology. This Phase 2 expansion will cost \$5.99M, which includes renovation of existing space and a 2,500-SF addition, exhibits fabrication, and new exterior features. This bond bill covers renovations to the building's exterior, signage, and improvements along Route 40 to increase safety, and the installation of assistive and security technologies in the facility.

*Round all amounts to the nearest \$1,000. The totals in Items 12 (Estimated Capital Costs) and 13 (Proposed Funding Sources) must match. The proposed funding sources must not include the value of real property unless an equivalent value is shown under Estimated Capital Costs.*

**12. Estimated Capital Costs**

<b>Acquisition</b>	
<b>Design</b>	\$599,000
<b>Construction</b>	\$4,200,000
<b>Equipment</b>	\$800,000
<b>Total</b>	\$5,599,000

**13. Proposed Funding Sources - (List all funding sources and amounts.)**

Governor's Capital Budget	\$1,474,000
Federal Community Grant Request	\$1,185,000
Legislative Bond Bill	\$440,000
County government	\$500,000
Corporate and other philanthropy	\$2,000,000
<b>Total</b>	\$5,599,000

<b>14. Project Schedule (Enter a date or one of the following in each box. N/A, TBD or Complete)</b>			
<b>Begin Design</b>	<b>Complete Design</b>	<b>Begin Construction</b>	<b>Complete Construction</b>
7/1/2024	9/30/2024	10/1/2024	6/30/2025
<b>15. Total Private Funds and Pledges Raised</b>	<b>16. Current Number of People Served Annually at Project Site</b>		<b>17. Number of People to be Served Annually After the Project is Complete</b>
200000.00	30,000		100,000
<b>18. Other State Capital Grants to Recipients in the Past 15 Years</b>			
<b>Legislative Session</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	
2018	\$250,000	Renovation of Preview Center	
2022	\$750,000	Governor's capital budget for renovation and construct	
<b>19. Legal Name and Address of Grantee</b>		<b>Project Address (If Different)</b>	
Discovery Center at Water's Edge, Inc. 4505 Pulaski Highway Belcamp, MD 21017			
<b>20. Legislative District in Which Project is Located</b>	34A - Harford County		
<b>21. Legal Status of Grantee (Please Check One)</b>			
<b>Local Govt.</b>	<b>For Profit</b>	<b>Non Profit</b>	<b>Federal</b>
[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]
<b>22. Grantee Legal Representative</b>		<b>23. If Match Includes Real Property:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Charles J. Nietubicz, Board Chairman	<b>Has An Appraisal Been Done?</b>	Yes/No
<b>Phone:</b>	443-621-8342		No
<b>Address:</b>		<b>If Yes, List Appraisal Dates and Value</b>	
2217 Titan Terrace Havre de Grace MD 21078			
Colleen Helmlinger, Esq. Brown, Snee, Young, Lutche, & Helmlinger, P.A. 112 S. Main Street Bel Air, MD 21014			

<b>24. Impact of Project on Staffing and Operating Cost at Project Site</b>			
<b>Current # of Employees</b>	<b>Projected # of Employees</b>	<b>Current Operating Budget</b>	<b>Projected Operating Budget</b>
3 (includes	10	438000.00	1200000.00
<b>25. Ownership of Property (Info Requested by Treasurer's Office for bond purposes)</b>			
<b>A. Will the grantee own or lease (pick one) the property to be improved?</b>			Lease
<b>B. If owned, does the grantee plan to sell within 15 years?</b>			No
<b>C. Does the grantee intend to lease any portion of the property to others?</b>			No
<b>D. If property is owned by grantee any space is to be leased, provide the following:</b>			
<b>Lessee</b>	<b>Terms of Lease</b>	<b>Cost Covered by Lease</b>	<b>Square Footage Leased</b>
<b>E. If property is leased by grantee - Provide the following:</b>			
<b>Name of Leaser</b>	<b>Length of Lease</b>	<b>Options to Renew</b>	
4505 Pulaski Highway LLC	3+ years	Property will be gifted at	
<b>26. Building Square Footage:</b>			
<b>Current Space GSF</b>	5400		
<b>Space to be Renovated GSF</b>	2200		
<b>New GSF</b>	7600*		

**27. Year of Construction of Any Structures Proposed for Renovation, Restoration or Conversion**

1980

**28. Comments**

\*7,600 SF includes renovation of the existing building. We will also add an addition of approximately 2,500 SF to complete our goal of 10,000 SF.

**THE NEED:**

Maryland suffers from an inadequate supply of candidates qualified for science and technology positions, particularly in the area of computing sciences, where many high-tech jobs remain chronically unfilled. For instance, as of February 22, 2024, the Maryland Workforce Exchange shows that there is only one candidate for every five jobs in many positions in IT. As these jobs often pay well over \$100,000, the lack of available workers in these fields presents a threat to Maryland's wellbeing and no doubt is suppressing state tax base and economic growth of the business community.

The Discovery Center at Waters Edge is part of the solution to this problem. Studies show that informal science experiences have an outsized impact on whether students pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects and careers. One study found that students who participated in summer and afterschool STEM activities were almost twice as likely to pursue a STEM career than students who did not.

A regional center plays a complementary and different role than that of a major attraction like the Maryland Science Center. At the local level, a facility like the Discovery Center is much more than a tourist destination. It is an economic driver, contributing \$220 into the local economy for every \$100 earned. The Discovery Center also serves as an anchor for the community's activities, particularly in STEM, and a resource for groups like FIRST Lego League, the Epicenter Summer Camps, and many other nonprofits needing a home base. In the first three months of its operation, the Discovery Center has hosted over a thousand people from Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, hungry for educational entertainment opportunities for their children. We expect this demand to continue to grow.

The Discovery Center designed its three-phase growth plan to allow time to create earned and operational income, which will form the basis of its self-sufficiency in the future. Studies of science centers across the country has shown that a 10,000 square-foot facility is a "minimum viable product." Phase 2 will allow us to reach this milestone and create a foundation for future growth and prosperity, benefiting not just Harford County, but counties across the state.

An investment in the Discovery Center is an investment in the State's future prosperity.