

Council Bill 24-2026 Fiscal Analysis

Introduced: April 6, 2026

Fiscal Manager: Yusef Ibrahim

Legislative Intent: Council Bill 24-2026 would amend the Howard County Zoning Regulations to expand eligibility for the Optional Design Project process to certain commercial properties along the Route 1 corridor. The bill modifies the definition of “Optional Design Project” and establishes a new subsection allowing commercial properties fronting Route 1 and less than 10 acres in size to utilize this development process.

ANALYSIS

Fiscal Impact:

The fiscal impact of this legislation is unknown, as we cannot predict future development decisions of property owners.

CB24-2026 is a zoning text amendment and does not directly generate County expenditures or require new funding. The bill expands access to the existing Optional Design Project process, which allows for a more flexible and coordinated approach to site design and redevelopment.

Based on the Technical Staff Report, the proposed amendment could potentially apply to approximately 133 commercial properties along the Route 1 corridor that meet the eligibility criteria (see Attachment A). There are no site-specific development plans or project determinations identified at this time. As a result, the scale and type of future redevelopment activity cannot be quantified and will depend on individual project proposals brought forward through the Optional Design Project process.

Budget Implications:

FY 2026 Operating Budget Line¹: Total DPZ General Fund Budget (\$8,785,752)

No changes to the FY 2026 Operating Budget are anticipated due to this bill.

Other Notes:

CB46-2025 reestablished and modified the Route 1 tax credit program for certain commercial and industrial properties along the Route 1 corridor. The program provides tax credits for

¹ Page 159 in HC FY26 Approved Operating Budget

qualifying redevelopment activities, which result in a reduction of County property tax revenues, subject to an annual cap. In contrast, CB24-2026 expands eligibility for the Optional Design Project (ODP) process and does not directly generate a fiscal impact.