

Introduced 04-06-2026
Public Hearing 04-20-2026
Council Action 05-04-2026
Executive Action 05-14-2026
Effective Date 07-14-2026

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2026 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 5

Bill No. 24 -2026 (ZRA-222)

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of 10052 Washington Boulevard, LLC.

SHORT TITLE: Optional Design Projects – Route 1 Corridor

AN ACT amending the Howard County Zoning Regulations to change the definition of “Optional Design Project”; add a new subsection in Section 128.0 entitled “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor”; expanding eligibility for the Optional Design Project process to certain commercial properties along Route 1; adding additional use criteria; and generally related to the Optional Design Project process.

Introduced and read first time April 6, 2026. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.
By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on April 20, 2026.

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on May 4, 2026 and Passed , Passed with amendments , Failed .

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 5 day of May, 2026 at 5:00 a.m. (p.m.)

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive May 14, 2026

Calvin Ball
Calvin Ball, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1 **Section 1. Be It Enacted** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that the Howard
2 County Zoning Regulations are amended as follows:

3 By amending:

4 Section 103.0.- “Definitions”

5 To amend the definition of “Optional Design Project”

6
7 By adding:

8 Section 128.0. - “Supplementary Zoning District Regulations”

9 New Subsection P. - “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor”

10
11 **Howard County Zoning Regulations**

12 **Section 103.0 Definitions**

13 **O**

14 Optional Design Project: [[The equivalent of a Planned Unit Development in a CR Zoning
15 District, an]] AN Optional Design Project is an alternative development proposal wherein the
16 permitted land uses, the associated land use regulations, the development design, and other
17 intended characteristics for the development site are initially drafted through a deliberative
18 planning process between the developer and the Department of Planning and Zoning, and
19 ultimately subject to final approval by the Planning Board.

20
21 **Section 128.0 – Supplementary Zoning District Regulations**

22 **P. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS IN ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR**

23 1. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY.

24 THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSECTION IS TO EXPAND THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS
25 TO ALL COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES FRONTING U.S. ROUTE 1, WITH A TOTAL LOT AREA OF
26 LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES. THE INTENT OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS IS TO
27 SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR REINVESTMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ALONG THE ROUTE 1
28 CORRIDOR BY ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN AND COORDINATED SITE
29 PLANNING. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS PROMOTE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT THAT

1 REFLECTS THE GOALS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR DESIGN
2 MANUAL AND ADVANCES HOWARD COUNTY'S ADOPTED REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC
3 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PROVIDES FOR
4 INDIVIDUALIZED AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS TO ENCOURAGE
5 CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT THAT RESPONDS TO SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT,
6 MINIMIZES ISOLATED OR DISCONNECTED BUILDINGS AND PAD SITES, AND ACHIEVES
7 COHESIVE, CONTEXT SENSITIVE DESIGN OUTCOMES THAT ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND
8 FUNCTIONALITY OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR.

9
10 2. CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.

11 THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE
12 PERMITTED ONLY WHEN THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

- 13 A. BRINGS THE SITE INTO CONFORMANCE WITH THE ROUTE 1 MANUAL AND
14 CURRENT SITE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS;
- 15 B. CONSISTS OF A PARCEL OR ASSEMBLAGE OF PARCELS HAVING A TOTAL LOT AREA
16 OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES;
- 17 C. FRONTS ON U.S. ROUTE 1; AND
- 18 D. SATISFIES THE PURPOSE SET FORTH IN SECTION 128.0.P.1.

19
20 3. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

21 PROJECTS THAT SATISFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 128.0.P.2 MAY
22 PROCEED UNDER THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS:

- 23 A. THE OWNER OF AN INTEREST IN A TRACT OF LAND MAY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION
24 FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT. PRIOR TO PREPARING A SPECIFIC PLAN AND
25 SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION, THE PETITIONER IS ENCOURAGED TO MEET WITH
26 THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING ON AN INFORMAL BASIS TO
27 DISCUSS THE OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
- 28 B. PRIOR TO FILING A FORMAL APPLICATION FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT,
29 THE PETITIONER SHALL PRESENT THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN TO THE
30 DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL FOR EVALUATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
31 PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 16.1500 OF THE HOWARD COUNTY

1 CODE. THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS SHALL BE
2 INCLUDED IN THE TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
3 PLANNING AND ZONING AND FORWARDED TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR ITS
4 CONSIDERATION OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

5 C. THE FORMAL APPLICATION SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
6 PLANNING AND ZONING AND SHALL INCLUDE:

7 (1) AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES SHEETS
8 DEPICTING ALL EXISTING NATURAL AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENT FEATURES
9 OF THE LAND AREA TO BE INCLUDED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT,
10 AND ALSO DEPICTING AND/OR LISTING, AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE, THE
11 FOLLOWING FOR THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT:

- 12 (A) A BOUNDARY SURVEY;
- 13 (B) PERMITTED USES;
- 14 (C) ACCESSORY USES;
- 15 (D) BUILDINGS;
- 16 (E) STRUCTURES;
- 17 (F) PARKING AREAS AND NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES;
- 18 (G) POINTS AND WIDTHS OF VEHICULAR INGRESS AND EGRESS;
- 19 (H) ON-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES AND CONNECTIONS TO
20 OFF-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES;
- 21 (I) LANDSCAPING;
- 22 (J) HARDSCAPING;
- 23 (K) RETAINED NATURAL FEATURES SUCH AS WETLANDS, STEEP
24 SLOPES, AND TREE AND FOREST COVER;
- 25 (L) ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATIONS OF ALL SIDES OF ALL BUILDINGS
26 AND SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES WITH EXTERIOR MATERIALS
27 SPECIFIED;
- 28 (M) EXTERIOR LIGHTING PLAN WITH LIGHTING STRUCTURES AND
29 LIGHT SOURCES GIVEN ON SPECIFIC LIGHTING PRODUCT
30 INFORMATION SHEETS; AND/OR

1 (N) INFORMATION ON THE ADJOINING PROPERTIES, INCLUDING THE
2 OWNER'S NAME, ZONING, EXISTING USE, AND EXISTING SITE
3 IMPROVEMENTS.

4 (2) A WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT THAT EXPRESSES IN DETAIL:

5 (A) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CONFORMS TO
6 THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.P.1;

7 (B) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL ENHANCE
8 AND NOT OVERWHELM THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY;

9 (C) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL BE A
10 BENEFIT TO HOWARD COUNTY THAT IS GREATER THAN A
11 CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE PROPERTY USING THE
12 UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS; AND

13 (D) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO
14 MARKET STUDIES AND TRAFFIC STUDIES.

15 D. THE SUBMITTED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION WILL BE ASSIGNED AN
16 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CASE NUMBER AND THE APPLICATION SHALL BE
17 SUBJECT TO THE STANDARD PRELIMINARY REVIEW PROCESS CONDUCTED FOR
18 ALL ZONING-RELATED CASES TO DETERMINE IF THE INFORMATION IN THE
19 APPLICATION MATERIALS IS SUFFICIENT TO ADEQUATELY EVALUATE THE
20 PROPOSAL. IF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING DETERMINES THAT
21 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND/OR CLARIFICATION IS NEEDED, IT SHALL SO
22 NOTIFY THE APPLICANT IN WRITING WITHIN 14 DAYS OF RECEIVING THE
23 APPLICATION. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION
24 INFORMATION IS DETERMINED TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE INITIAL FORMAL
25 EVALUATION, THE CASE SHALL BE CONSIDERED OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED FOR
26 SCHEDULING PURPOSES.

27 E. WITHIN 14 DAYS OF OFFICIALLY ACCEPTING THE CASE FOR SCHEDULING
28 PURPOSES, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL SCHEDULE A
29 REQUIRED FORMAL PROJECT MEETING WITH THE PETITIONER AND/OR THE
30 PETITIONER'S PROJECT TEAM IF:

1 (1) THE PETITIONER HAS NOT HELD INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH THE
2 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING TO DISCUSS THE OVERALL
3 CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PRIOR TO
4 SUBMITTING THE FORMAL APPLICATION, OR

5 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING HAS CONCERNS
6 REGARDING THE USE, DESIGN, AND OR SCOPE OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN
7 PROJECT THAT HAVE CHANGED FROM WHAT WAS DISCUSSED, INDICATED,
8 AND/OR SHOWN DURING THE INFORMAL MEETING(S).

9 F. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
10 PLANNING AND ZONING TO BE SUITABLY IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE PURPOSE
11 STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.P.1, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PETITIONER, THE
12 PETITIONER MAY SCHEDULE TO HAVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BE
13 REVIEWED BY THE SUBDIVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE (SRC) AT A REGULARLY
14 SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE SRC. THE PURPOSE OF THIS OPTIONAL SRC
15 REVIEW WOULD BE FOR THE PETITIONER TO HAVE ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANY
16 ISSUES IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT THAT WOULD NOT COMPLY WITH ALL
17 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF ANY OF THE REVIEWING AGENCIES.

18 G. AT THE POINT THAT THE PETITIONER DECIDES TO PROCEED WITH THE OPTIONAL
19 DESIGN PROJECT AND SO NOTIFIES THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
20 ZONING, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL SCHEDULE THE
21 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT FOR A PLANNING BOARD HEARING. THE
22 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL PREPARE A TECHNICAL STAFF
23 REPORT ON THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, AND FORMALLY ISSUE THIS
24 TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED
25 PLANNING BOARD HEARING.

26 H. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL HOLD ITS PUBLIC HEARING ON THE OPTIONAL
27 DESIGN PROJECT AND MAY TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ANY COMMENTS
28 PRESENTED AT THAT PUBLIC HEARING. THE PLANNING BOARD MAY:

29 (1) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS PROPOSED, BASED UPON
30 FINDINGS THAT THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL

1 ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 128.0.P.1 AND SATISFIES THE
2 CRITERIA SET FORTH IN SECTION 128.0.P.3.C.2;

3 (2) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WITH REVISIONS OR
4 CONDITIONS, BASED UPON FINDINGS THAT THE REVISED OPTIONAL
5 DESIGN PROJECT WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION
6 128.0.P.1 AND SATISFIES THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN SECTION
7 128.0.P.3.C.2; OR

8 (3) DENY THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

9 I. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL ISSUE ITS FORMAL DECISION ON THE OPTIONAL
10 DESIGN PROJECT IN A DECISION AND ORDER. IF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT
11 IS APPROVED, ALL APPROVED EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT SHALL
12 BE STAMPED AS APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD AND SIGNED BY THE
13 PLANNING BOARD CHAIRPERSON.

14 J. NO SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHALL BE APPROVED FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN
15 PROJECT UNLESS THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONFORMS SUBSTANTIALLY TO
16 ALL EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS APPROVED BY THE
17 PLANNING BOARD. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BELOW FOR PRE-AUTHORIZED MINOR
18 MODIFICATIONS, ANY MODIFICATIONS TO ANY PLANNING BOARD APPROVED
19 FEATURES OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT MUST BE APPROVED BY THE
20 PLANNING BOARD:

21 (1) MINOR ADDITIONS TO STRUCTURES, WITH A FLOOR AREA NO LARGER
22 THAN 10% OF THE EXISTING FLOOR AREA OF THE MAIN FLOOR, NOT TO
23 EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET.

24 (2) MINOR NEW ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IF THE LOCATION DOES NOT
25 INTERFERE WITH THE EXISTING APPROVED SITE LAYOUT (E.G.
26 CIRCULATION, PARKING, LOADING, STORM WATER MANAGEMENT
27 FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING OR BUFFERING).

28 (3) MINOR ADDITIONS TO PARKING LOTS COMPRISING NO MORE THAN 25%
29 OF THE ORIGINAL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES REQUIRED, NOT TO
30 EXCEED 25 SPACES.

1 (4) CLEARING OR GRADING THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET IN
2 AREA.

3 (5) SIMILAR MINOR MODIFICATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT
4 OF PLANNING AND ZONING, INCLUDING REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBER OF
5 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND THE INTENSITY OF THE UNIT MIX.
6

7 4. ADDITIONAL USES PERMITTED FOR OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS.

8 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY SET FORTH IN
9 SECTION 128.0.P.2 SHALL BE ELIGIBLE TO INCLUDE ANY USES SET FORTH IN THIS SECTION:

10 A. USES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT

11 (1) EXCEPT FOR THOSE EXCLUDED USES LISTED IN SECTION 128.0.P.4.B
12 BELOW, ALL OTHER USE CATEGORIES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT
13 IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS ARE PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF
14 RIGHT, PROVIDED THAT THE USE CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN
15 APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

16 (2) SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY PERMITTED AS A
17 MATTER OF RIGHT IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS, BUT ARE
18 CONSIDERED TO BE EQUIVALENT TO AND/OR COMPATIBLE WITH THE
19 PERMITTED USE CATEGORIES, PROVIDED THAT THE SPECIAL USE
20 CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN
21 PROJECT AND PROVIDED THAT THE SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES ARE NOT
22 USES LISTED IN SECTION 128.0.P.4.B BELOW.

23 B. EXCLUDED USES

24 (1) ADULT LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS.

25 (2) BUS TERMINALS.

26 (3) DWELLINGS, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
27 128.0.P.4.C.

28 (4) FUNERAL HOMES AND MORTUARIES.

29 (5) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM EQUIPMENT
30 MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND PAINTING FACILITIES, INCLUDING FULL
31 BODY REPAIR AND INCIDENTAL SALE OF PARTS.

1 (6) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM EQUIPMENT
2 SALES.

3 (7) MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION STATIONS.

4 (8) MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS OR TIRE STORE, INCLUDING INSTALLATION
5 FACILITIES.

6 (9) MOTOR VEHICLE TOWING AND STORAGE FACILITIES.

7 (10) NURSING HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES.

8 (11) PRIVATE PARKS, SWIMMING POOLS, PLAYGROUNDS, ATHLETIC FIELDS,
9 TENNIS COURTS, BASKETBALL COURTS, AND SIMILAR PRIVATE,
10 NONCOMMERCIAL RECREATION FACILITIES.

11 (12) RELIGIOUS FACILITIES, STRUCTURES AND LAND USED PRIMARILY FOR
12 RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.

13 (13) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE DRIVE-
14 THROUGH SERVICE, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
15 128.0.P.4.C.

16 (14) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND
17 UNIVERSITIES, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
18 128.0.P.4.C.

19 (15) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS.

20 C. INTEGRATED-DESIGN USES SUBJECT TO AUTHORIZATION

21 THE FOLLOWING USES MAY BE AUTHORIZED AS PERMITTED USES IN ANY
22 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE AFOREMENTIONED CONDITIONS OF
23 ELIGIBILITY, PROVIDED THAT IT IS FOUND THAT THEY ARE CREATIVELY
24 INTEGRATED INTO THE PROJECT'S ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DESIGN AND ARE
25 SPECIFICALLY APPROVED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

26 (1) MOTOR VEHICLE FUELING FACILITY.

27 (2) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE DRIVE-
28 THROUGH SERVICE.

29 (3) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND
30 UNIVERSITIES.

31 D. ACCESSORY USES IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT



Howard County Maryland
Department of Planning and Zoning
3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

(410) 313-2350
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DPZ Office Use only:

Case No: ZRA-222

Date Filed: 11/10/2025

Zoning Regulation Amendment Petition

Petition Request

Description of Proposed Amendment:

Amend Section 128.0 of the Howard County Zoning Regulations to add §128.0.Q, "Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor," expanding eligibility for Optional Design Projects to commercial properties fronting U.S. Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres.

Petitioner's Representative Information

Petitioner's Representative Name: Mandee Heintz
Address: 1001 Fleet Street, Baltimore, MD, 21202
Phone: (443) 797-3076
Email: mandee.heintz@saul.com
Profession: Attorney



Petitioner Information

Petitioner Name: Dean Gonzalez
Petitioners Business Name/Trading As: 10052 Washington Boulevard LLC
Address: 10052 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, MD, 20723
Phone: (443) 824-6000
Email: deanjgonzalez2013@gmail.com
Petitioner's Interest in Subject Property: Sole Owner
If the petitioner is not the property owner, please explain:

Zoning Regulation Amendment Information

Please provide a brief statement concerning the reason(s) the requested amendment(s) to the Zoning Regulations is (are) being proposed:

The Petitioner seeks to redevelop property along Route 1 that is blighted, underutilized, and specifically identified for redevelopment in the Route 1 Corridor Plan. The amendment expands access to the existing Optional Design Project process for smaller parcels, providing flexibility for coordinated, high-quality redevelopment that strengthens corridor design, supports economic growth, and promotes long-term reinvestment.

The Legislative Intent of the Zoning Regulations in Section 100.0.A. expresses that the Zoning Regulations have the purpose of "...preserving and promoting the health, safety and welfare of the community." Please provide a detailed justification statement demonstrating how the proposed amendment(s) will be in harmony with this purpose and the other issues in Section 100.0.A.

The amendment advances the legislative intent of Section 100.0.A by promoting public health, safety, and welfare through expanded access to the existing Optional Design Project process for smaller Route 1 sites. It ensures coordinated, high-quality redevelopment that improves design, circulation, and safety, supports reinvestment in aging properties, and fosters revitalization consistent with County goals for a safer, more vibrant corridor.

Provide the address, Tax Map, and Parcel Number for any parcel(s) of land known to be affected by the amendment(s) that the Petitioner owns or has a legal or equitable interest in.

Property Address: 10052 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Maryland 20723 Tax Map: 0050 Grid: 0010 Parcel: 0263

Zoning Regulation Amendment Criteria

Describe the compatibility, including potential adverse impacts and consequences, of the proposed zoning regulation amendment with the existing and potential land uses of the surrounding areas and within the same zoning district.

The amendment expands access to the existing Optional Design Project process, ensuring redevelopment along Route 1—an area with a mix of zoning districts and uses—remains compatible with surrounding development. It does not bypass review steps and maintains zoning, site, and design standards. This promotes context-sensitive, high-quality redevelopment that strengthens corridor function, connectivity, and visual cohesion while minimizing the potential adverse impacts.

Provide an overview of the properties to which the zoning regulation amendment could apply and, if feasible, a map of the impacted properties.

The amendment would apply to all commercial properties fronting Route 1, with a total parcel area of less than ten (10) acres.

Describe any conflicts that would occur in the Howard County Zoning Regulations as a result of the zoning regulation amendment.

The amendment aligns with the structure and intent of the Howard County Zoning Regulations by expanding access to the existing Optional Design Project process for smaller Route 1 properties. This expansion preserves existing standards and review procedures, ensuring consistency within the regulatory framework. It strengthens opportunities for coordinated, high-quality redevelopment and advances the County's revitalization and economic development goals.

Describe the compatibility of the proposed zoning regulation amendment with the policies and objectives, specifically including the environmental policies and objectives, of the Howard County General Plan.

The amendment aligns with HoCo By Design and the Route 1 Corridor Plan by expanding access to the existing Optional Design Project for smaller Route 1 properties. It advances goals for context-sensitive, high-quality design, supports reinvestment, and promotes compatibility with surrounding uses. The amendment fulfills policies calling for flexible zoning tools, mixed-use activity centers, and redevelopment that reduces blight and strengthens the Corridor. See attached supplemental information.

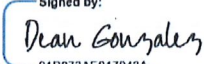
If the zoning regulation text amendment would impact eight (8) parcels of land or less, please provide the following:

- (i) A list of those impacted parcels;**
- (ii) The address of each impacted parcel;**
- (iii) The ownership of each impacted parcel; and**
- (iv) The contact information for the owner, if an individual, or resident agent or owner, if a corporate entity, of each impacted parcel.**

This amendment applies to all commercial properties fronting U.S. Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres. As such, it is anticipated to affect more than 8 properties along the Route 1 Corridor.

Signatures

The undersigned hereby affirms that all of the statements and information contained in, or filed with this petition, are true and correct.

Petitioner's Signature  Signed by: _____ Date 11/11/2025
91B873AE917043A...
Dean Gonzalez, as Authorized Signatory of
10052 Washington Boulevard LLC

If the Property Owner is not the Petitioner, you must submit a signed [Property Owners Authorization](#).

Process information and submittal requirements can be found on the [ProjectDox website](#).

Digitally Signed by: Mandee Heintz
Signature Date: 2025-11-10 13:34:45

CONTACT US

Department of Planning and Zoning
Public Service and Zoning Division
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043
TEL: 410.313.2350

Zoning Regulation Amendment Petition

Supplemental Information

Zoning Regulation Amendment Request

To amend Section 128.0 of the Howard County Zoning Regulations to add §128.0.Q, “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor” establishing eligibility, procedures, and permitted uses for Optional Design Projects for commercial properties fronting Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres.

Zoning Regulation Amendment Information

Explain the reason the requested amendment is being proposed.

The Petitioner seeks to redevelop the property located at 10052 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Maryland 20723 (the “Property”), in Howard County (the “County”). The Property is highlighted in red on page 75 of the Route 1 Corridor Plan, designating it within the North Laurel District as a site specifically earmarked for redevelopment. The Property is currently a blighted, vacant car dealership and presents an opportunity for thoughtful redevelopment that aligns with the County’s Route 1 Corridor (the “Corridor”) revitalization goals. Uniquely situated with dual frontage on Route 1, the Property is a prime candidate for coordinated, high-quality, placemaking redevelopment in accordance with the Route 1 Corridor Plan. Such redevelopment promotes improvements to circulation, connectivity, streetscape, and the overall functionality and appearance of the Corridor.

The Petitioner’s proposed redevelopment seeks to transform the Property into a vibrant, context-sensitive asset through the Optional Design Project process, expanded by §128.0.Q. A valuable, but inaccessible and underutilized tool to spur redevelopment, the Optional Design Process allows for individualized review of redevelopment proposals that respond to site-specific conditions, such as the dual frontage and adjacency to a planned Transit Oriented Development, encourage creative and integrated design, and achieve cohesive development patterns that enhance the Corridor.

As currently written, the Howard County Zoning Regulations limit access to the Optional Design Project tool to properties within the CR district, consequently erecting a barrier for properties that lack the CR overlay but would otherwise benefit and be best served by flexibility, to fully support innovative redevelopment on commercial properties along Route 1. The Optional Design Project process is already an established Howard County development tool, and the proposed text in §128.0.Q expands eligibility and access to this critical redevelopment tool, which will ultimately result in comprehensive, coordinated, high-quality design along the Corridor, while maintaining oversight to ensure consistency with the goals of the Route 1 Corridor Plan and the County’s adopted revitalization and economic development objectives.

Accordingly, the Petitioner respectfully requests an amendment to Section 128.0 to add §128.0.Q, establishing the Optional Design Project process for commercial properties fronting Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres. This amendment will promote context-sensitive

redevelopment, enhance the streetscape, encourage continued investment along the Corridor, and advance the County's broader goals of revitalization, economic development, and urban-style design.

The Legislative Intent of the Zoning Regulations in Section 100.0.A. expresses that the Zoning Regulations have the purpose of ...preserving and promoting the health, safety and welfare of the community. Provide a detailed justification statement demonstrating how the proposed amendment will be in harmony with this purpose and the other issues in Section 100.0.A.

The Legislative Intent of the Zoning Regulations, as set forth in Section 100.0.A, affirms the Regulations are designed to preserve and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community. The proposed amendment to Section 128.0 to add §128.0.Q supports this intent by expanding access to an existing, well-established planning tool—the Optional Design Project (ODP) process—to additional properties along the Route 1 Corridor.

The ODP process already serves as a proven mechanism for ensuring thoughtful, coordinated, and design-sensitive redevelopment. By expanding access to include smaller commercial properties fronting Route 1, this amendment allows more sites to benefit from comprehensive, site-specific review that integrates high-quality design, coordinated site layout, and compatible land uses. Each project reviewed under the ODP process is evaluated individually to ensure it meets applicable standards for design quality, circulation, and compatibility with the surrounding built environment.

This approach directly supports the preservation and promotion of public health, safety, and welfare. The ODP review process ensures compliance with all life-safety, fire, and environmental regulations, including stormwater management and accessibility standards. It also facilitates improvements in site circulation, pedestrian and vehicular safety, and streetscape design—key components of the County's goals for a safer and more connected Route 1 Corridor.

Beyond the physical and safety benefits, the amendment supports community welfare by stimulating reinvestment in underutilized and aging commercial sites. By extending the ODP process to a broader set of eligible parcels, the County can encourage high-quality redevelopment that enhances economic vitality, aesthetic appeal, and overall livability along the Corridor.

In sum, the proposed amendment is in clear harmony with the legislative intent of Section 100.0.A. It promotes the health, safety, and welfare of the community by expanding access to an existing, design-based review process that ensures redevelopment along Route 1 occurs in a safe, coordinated, and community-enhancing manner consistent with the County's long-term revitalization goals.

Zoning Regulation Amendment

The compatibility, including potential adverse impacts and consequences, of the proposed zoning regulation amendment with the existing and potential land uses of the surrounding areas and within the same zoning district.

The Optional Design Project process, as expanded by the proposed §128.0.Q, promotes redevelopment and reinvestment along the Route 1 Corridor in a manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses and consistent with the County's broader vision for the Corridor. By allowing properties with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres to utilize an existing, well-established planning tool—the Optional Design Project process—the amendment broadens access to a design-based mechanism that already exists within the Zoning Regulations.

Importantly, the amendment does not create a new development process or allow any project to bypass existing regulatory steps. All projects proceeding under the ODP process must continue to meet the full range of applicable zoning, subdivision, and site development requirements, including design standards, public infrastructure adequacy, and environmental compliance. In fact, for properties choosing to utilize the ODP option, the amendment adds an additional layer of oversight through Planning Board review, ensuring that projects are evaluated comprehensively for design quality, compatibility, and consistency with the County's adopted policies for the Route 1 Corridor.

By extending access to an existing tool rather than introducing a new entitlement, the amendment strengthens the County's ability to achieve cohesive, high-quality redevelopment outcomes. Projects reviewed under this process will enhance connectivity, pedestrian access, and streetscape character while ensuring appropriate transitions to adjacent residential, commercial, and employment areas. Each proposal will be subject to case-by-case review to ensure conformance with the Route 1 Corridor Manual and to address any potential impacts related to traffic, buffering, or site circulation.

Overall, the amendment promotes compatibility along the Corridor, supports reinvestment that is context-sensitive, visually cohesive, and functionally integrated way, while advancing the County's goals for a vibrant, safe, and economically sustainable Route 1 Corridor.

Conflicts in the Howard County Zoning Regulations as a result of the zoning regulation amendment.

The proposed amendment has been carefully drafted to align with the intent and overall structure of the existing Howard County Zoning Regulations by expanding access to the Optional Design Project process set forth in §127.5.H to include properties eligible under §128.0.Q. The Optional Design Project is an existing, well-established, but underutilized tool within the Zoning Regulations. Rather than creating conflicts or redundancies, this amendment addresses a regulatory gap by providing a clear and consistent pathway for smaller commercial properties fronting Route 1 to engage in coordinated, context-sensitive redevelopment.

While the current regulations support mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, and transit-oriented redevelopment, they do not explicitly allow all Route 1 properties to utilize the ODP process. The proposed amendment closes that gap without altering the underlying regulatory structure or modifying any existing standards for approval. It simply broadens eligibility for participation in an existing review process that already includes established design standards, procedural safeguards, and Planning Board oversight.

Projects utilizing the ODP process under §128.0.Q will remain subject to applicable zoning, subdivision, and site development requirements, ensuring that the amendment functions as an additional option, not a substitute for existing procedures. This ensures internal consistency across related provisions, including those governing design review, infrastructure adequacy, and compatibility with adjacent land uses.

By integrating seamlessly with current design criteria, procedural requirements, and review authority, the amendment strengthens the regulatory framework rather than conflicting with it. It enhances the County's ability to achieve high-quality, coordinated redevelopment along Route 1—advancing revitalization and economic development goals while maintaining alignment with the intent and structure of the existing Zoning Regulations.

The compatibility of the proposed zoning regulation amendment with the policies and objectives, specifically including the environmental policies and objectives, of the Howard County General Plan.

The proposed zoning regulation amendment is consistent with the core policies and objectives of the Howard County General Plan, including those related to sustainable growth, environmental stewardship, economic development, and community livability. By expanding the Optional Design Project process under §128.0.Q for commercial properties fronting Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres, the amendment advances the General Plan's vision of creating well-connected, mixed-use communities that provide opportunities for coordinated redevelopment, high-quality design, and site-specific solutions, thereby supporting reinvestment and more context-sensitive development along the Corridor.

The proposed amendment is consistent with the policies and objectives set forth in HoCo By Design and the Route 1 Corridor Plan, particularly those promoting sustainable growth, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality, while directly supporting the County's strategic focus on revitalization and coordinated redevelopment along the Route 1 Corridor.

QBD-1 Policy Statement: Prioritize character and design in future development, recognizing variations in Howard County's unique areas.

QBD-1(1) Implementing Action: Identify areas to investigate character-based zoning concepts and consider the use of pattern books, design guidelines and manuals, or a hybrid approach to establish an intended character and design elements for different character areas in Howard County.

QBD-4 Policy Statement: Develop context-sensitive design standards appropriate for various scales of infill development to effectively transition between larger developments and established uses, and to encourage compatibility of small-scale infill within established neighborhoods.

QBD-4 Implementing Action: Explore the implementation of form-based or character-based districts and neighborhood compatibility standards that emphasize massing and form over use type.

RTE 1-1 Policy Statement: Support, retain, and grow the Route 1 Corridor's employment base.

RTE 1-1(8) Implementing Action: Target new retail development in the mixed-use activity centers to support the needs of new and existing residents in the Corridor.

RTE 1-2 Policy Statement: Attract public investment in the Route 1 Corridor.

RTE 1-2(7) Implementing Action: Provide incentives for development that generates economic activity in locations that offer amenities and public transportation access.

RTE 1-3 Policy Statement: Foster revitalization in the Route 1 Corridor.

RTE 1-3 Implementing Actions:

(2) Implement zoning changes to achieve the vision of the Corridor:

...

(b) Consider more flexibility.

(3) Improve access to neighborhood services by connecting neighborhoods to retail in the Corridor.

(4) Encourage land assembly to prevent piecemeal redevelopment and facilitate projects that are integral to the County's long-term development strategy.

(5) Encourage property maintenance and the reduction of blight.

RTE 1-4 Policy Statement: Increase opportunities for reinvestment of commercial and industrial properties in the Route 1 Corridor to address blight through new and existing zoning tools and tax credits.

RTE 1-5 Policy Statement: Adopt new tools to enhance the Route 1 Corridor's competitiveness and attract new industries while working to retain existing businesses.

RTE 1-9 Policy Statement: Revise the Route 1 Manual and County regulations to implement the HoCo By Design and Route 1 Corridor Plan development and redevelopment recommendations.

RTE 1-9(1) Implementing Action: Revise the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to support corridor wide new development and redevelopment.

RTE 1-17 Policy Statement: Catalyze the redevelopment of activity centers in the Route 1 Corridor and ensure they allow a mix of uses.

RTE 1-17 Implementing Actions:

...

(2) Develop a new industrial mixed-use zone (or combination of zones) that allows desired uses, including residential, commercial, and light industrial, in the Industrial Mixed-Use Activity Center character area.

...

(7) Evaluate and revise the Corridor Activity Center (CAC), Corridor Employment (CE), and Continuing Light Industrial (CLI) Overlay Zoning Districts to ensure the zones are appropriately located within activity centers and the districts allow for a mix of uses that support the vision of each character area.

(8) Encourage a mix of housing types available at different price points in activity centers to create more missing middle and affordable housing opportunities in the County.

See Page 75, North Laurel District, subject property is identified in Red.

RTE 1-25 Policy Statement: Protect industrial areas while introducing complementary new land uses within the Industrial Mixed-Use Activity Center character area in the North Laurel District.

Petitioner's Proposed Text

**Amendment to Section 128.0 (Supplementary Zoning Regulations) Adding Section 128.0.Q:
"Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor"**

Amend Section 128.0 as follows:

SECTION 128.0: SUPPLEMENTARY ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS.

ADD NEW §128.0.Q OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS IN ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR

1. **PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY.** THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSECTION IS TO EXPAND THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS TO ALL COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES FRONTING U.S. ROUTE 1, WITH A TOTAL LOT AREA OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES. THE INTENT OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS IS TO SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR REINVESTMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ALONG THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR BY ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN AND COORDINATED SITE PLANNING. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS PROMOTE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT THAT REFLECTS THE GOALS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR DESIGN MANUAL AND ADVANCES HOWARD COUNTY'S ADOPTED REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PROVIDES FOR INDIVIDUALIZED AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT THAT RESPONDS TO SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT, MINIMIZES ISOLATED OR DISCONNECTED BUILDINGS AND PAD SITES, AND ACHIEVES COHESIVE, CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DESIGN OUTCOMES THAT ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND FUNCTIONALITY OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR.
2. **CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.** THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHEN THE PROPOSED PROJECT (A) BRINGS THE SITE INTO CONFORMANCE WITH THE ROUTE 1 MANUAL AND CURRENT SITE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS; (B) CONSISTS OF A PARCEL OR ASSEMBLAGE OF PARCELS HAVING A TOTAL LOT AREA OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES; (C) FRONTS ON U.S. ROUTE 1; AND (D) SATISFIES THE PURPOSE SET FORTH IN §128.0.Q.1.
3. **PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.** PROJECTS THAT SATISFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF §128.0.Q.2 MAY PROCEED UNDER THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS, FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL PROCEDURE IN §121.1.H, OR ONLY THOSE PORTIONS OF THAT PROCEDURE RELEVANT TO THE SPECIFIC PROJECT. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, ANY PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO THE CR OVERLAY DISTRICT AND THE ACREAGE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN §121.1.H.1 SHALL NOT APPLY TO PROJECTS MEETING THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY SET FORTH IN §128.0.Q.2.
4. **ADDITIONAL USES PERMITTED FOR OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS.** OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY SET FORTH IN §128.0.Q.2 SHALL BE ELIGIBLE TO INCLUDE ANY USES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT UNDER §121.1.B, ANY INTEGRATED-DESIGN USES AUTHORIZED UNDER §121.1.E, AND ANY ACCESSORY USES PERMITTED UNDER §121.1.F.

Example of How Text of Section 128.0.Q Would Appear if Adopted:

§128.0.Q Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor

- 1. Purpose and Applicability.** The purpose of this subsection is to expand the Optional Design Project process to all commercial properties fronting U.S. Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres. The intent of the Optional Design Project process is to serve as a catalyst for reinvestment and redevelopment along the Route 1 Corridor by encouraging innovative, high-quality design and coordinated site planning. Optional Design Projects promote integrated development that reflects the goals and design principles of the Route 1 Corridor Design Manual and advances Howard County's adopted revitalization and economic development objectives. The Optional Design Project process provides for individualized and comprehensive review of project proposals to encourage creative redevelopment that responds to site-specific conditions and context, minimizes isolated or disconnected buildings and pad sites, and achieves cohesive, context-sensitive design outcomes that enhance the character and functionality of the Route 1 Corridor.
- 2. Conditions of Eligibility.** The optional design project process prescribed in this Section shall be permitted only when the proposed project (a) brings the site into conformance with the Route 1 Manual and current site development requirements; (b) consists of a parcel or assemblage of parcels having a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres; (c) fronts on U.S. Route 1; and (d) satisfies the purpose set forth in §128.0.Q.1.
- 3. Procedure for Approval of an Optional Design Project.** Projects that satisfy the eligibility requirements of §128.0.Q.2 may proceed under the Optional Design Project process, following the approval procedure in §121.1.H, or only those portions of that procedure relevant to the specific project. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any procedures specific to the CR Overlay District and the acreage requirements set forth in §121.1.H.1 shall not apply to projects meeting the conditions of eligibility set forth in §128.0.Q.2.
- 4. Additional Uses Permitted for Optional Design Projects.** Optional Design Projects that meet the conditions of eligibility set forth in §128.0.Q.2 shall be eligible to include any uses permitted as a matter of right under §121.1.B, any integrated-design uses authorized under §121.1.E, and any accessory uses permitted under §121.1.F.



Howard County Maryland
Department of Planning and Zoning
3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

dpzzoning@howardcountymd.gov (410) 313-2350

AFFIDAVIT AND DISCLOSURE OF CONTRIBUTION

For Petitions to Amend the Zoning Regulations, Zoning Maps and Preliminary Develop Plans of Howard County

Zoning Matter: Amendment to Section 128.0 to add §128.0.Q, "Optional Design Projects in
Route 1 Corridor" - 10052 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Maryland 20723

AFFIDAVIT AS TO CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANDIDATES AND BUSINESS ENGAGEMENTS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

**As required by the Maryland Public Ethics Law Annotated Code of Maryland, General
Provisions Article Sections 5-852 through 5-854**

ALL BOLDED TERMS ARE DEFINED BY SECTION 5-852 MARK EACH PARAGRAPH AS
APPLICABLE

1. I, 10052 Washington Boulevard LLC, the **Applicant** filing an **Application** in the above zoning matter, to the best of my information, knowledge, and belief HAVE / HAVE NOT made a **Contribution** or contributions having a cumulative value of \$500 or more to the treasurer of a **Candidate** or the treasurer of a **Political Committee** during the 48-month period before the **Application** was filed; and I AM / AM NOT currently **Engaging in Business** with an **Elected Official**.
2. I, the **Applicant** or a **Party of Record** in the above referenced zoning matter, acknowledge and affirm that, if I or my **Family Member** has made a **Contribution** or contributions having a cumulative total of \$500 or more during the 48-month period before the **Application** was filed or during the pendency of the **Application**, I will file a disclosure providing the name of the **Candidate** or **Elected Official** to whose treasurer or **Political Committee** the **Contribution** was made, the amount, and the date of the **Contribution**; and that a **Contribution** made between the filing and the disposition of the **Application** will be disclosed within 5 business days after the **Contribution**.


3. I, the **Applicant**, acknowledge and affirm that, if I begin **Engaging in Business** with an **Elected Official** between the filing and the disposition of the **Application**, I will file this Affidavit at the time of **Engaging in Business** with the **Elected Official**.

I SOLEMNLY AFFIRM UNDER THE PENALTIES OF PERJURY and upon personal knowledge that the contents of this Affidavit are true.

Dean Gonzalez

(Print Full Name)

Dean Gonzalez, as Authorized Signatory
of 10052 Washington Boulevard LLC

Signed by:

01B873AE917043A...

11/10/2025

(Sign full name & indicate legal
capacity, if applicable)

Date

Dean Gonzalez, as Authorized Signatory
of 10052 Washington Boulevard LLC

Petitioner's Proposed Text

Amendment to Section 103.0.O (Definitions) Amending definition of "Optional Design Project"

Amend Section 103.0.O as follows:

Optional Design Project: ~~[[The equivalent of a Planned Unit Development in a CR Zoning District, an]]~~ AN Optional Design Project is an alternative development proposal wherein the permitted land uses, the associated land use regulations, the development design, and other intended characteristics for the development site are initially drafted through a deliberative planning process between the developer and the Department of Planning and Zoning, and ultimately subject to final approval by the Planning Board.

Amendment to Section 128.0 (Supplementary Zoning District Regulations) Adding Section 128.0.Q: "Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor"

Amend Section 128.0 as follows:

REVISED



SECTION 128.0: SUPPLEMENTARY ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS:

ADD NEW §128.0.Q OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS IN ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR

1. **PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY.** THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSECTION IS TO EXPAND THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS TO ALL COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES FRONTING U.S. ROUTE 1, WITH A TOTAL LOT AREA OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES. THE INTENT OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS IS TO SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR REINVESTMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ALONG THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR BY ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN AND COORDINATED SITE PLANNING. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS PROMOTE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT THAT REFLECTS THE GOALS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR DESIGN MANUAL AND ADVANCES HOWARD COUNTY'S ADOPTED REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PROVIDES FOR INDIVIDUALIZED AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT THAT RESPONDS TO SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT, MINIMIZES ISOLATED OR DISCONNECTED BUILDINGS AND PAD SITES, AND ACHIEVES COHESIVE, CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DESIGN OUTCOMES THAT ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND FUNCTIONALITY OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR.
2. **CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.** THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHEN THE PROPOSED PROJECT (A) BRINGS THE SITE INTO CONFORMANCE WITH THE ROUTE 1 MANUAL AND CURRENT SITE

DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS; (B) CONSISTS OF A PARCEL OR ASSEMBLAGE OF PARCELS HAVING A TOTAL LOT AREA OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES; (C) FRONTS ON U.S. ROUTE 1; AND (D) SATISFIES THE PURPOSE SET FORTH IN SECTION 128.0.Q.1.

3. **PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.** PROJECTS THAT SATISFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 128.0.Q.2 MAY PROCEED UNDER THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS:

- a. THE OWNER OF AN INTEREST IN A TRACT OF LAND MAY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT. PRIOR TO PREPARING A SPECIFIC PLAN AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION, THE PETITIONER IS ENCOURAGED TO MEET WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING ON AN INFORMAL BASIS TO DISCUSS THE OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
- b. PRIOR TO FILING A FORMAL APPLICATION FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, THE PETITIONER SHALL PRESENT THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN TO THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL FOR EVALUATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 16.1500 OF THE HOWARD COUNTY CODE. THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING AND FORWARDED TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR ITS CONSIDERATION OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
- c. THE FORMAL APPLICATION SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING AND SHALL INCLUDE:
 - (1) AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES SHEETS DEPICTING ALL EXISTING NATURAL AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENT FEATURES OF THE LAND AREA TO BE INCLUDED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, AND ALSO DEPICTING AND/OR LISTING, AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE, THE FOLLOWING FOR THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT:
 - (a) A BOUNDARY SURVEY
 - (b) PERMITTED USES
 - (c) ACCESSORY USES
 - (d) BUILDINGS
 - (e) STRUCTURES
 - (f) PARKING AREAS AND NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES
 - (g) POINTS AND WIDTHS OF VEHICULAR INGRESS AND EGRESS
 - (h) ON-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES AND CONNECTIONS TO OFF-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES
 - (i) LANDSCAPING
 - (j) HARDCAPING

- (k) RETAINED NATURAL FEATURES SUCH AS WETLANDS, STEEP SLOPES, AND TREE AND FOREST COVER
 - (l) ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATIONS OF ALL SIDES OF ALL BUILDINGS AND SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES WITH EXTERIOR MATERIALS SPECIFIED
 - (m) EXTERIOR LIGHTING PLAN WITH LIGHTING STRUCTURES AND LIGHT SOURCES GIVEN ON SPECIFIC LIGHTING PRODUCT INFORMATION SHEETS
 - (n) INFORMATION ON THE ADJOINING PROPERTIES, INCLUDING THE OWNER NAME, ZONING, EXISTING USE, AND EXISTING SITE IMPROVEMENTS
- (2) A WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT THAT EXPRESSES IN DETAIL:
- (a) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CONFORMS TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.Q.1.
 - (b) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL ENHANCE AND NOT OVERWHELM THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY.
 - (c) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL BE A BENEFIT TO HOWARD COUNTY THAT IS GREATER THAN A CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE PROPERTY USING THE UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS.
 - (d) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO MARKET STUDIES AND TRAFFIC STUDIES.
- d. THE SUBMITTED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION WILL BE ASSIGNED AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CASE NUMBER AND THE APPLICATION SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE STANDARD PRELIMINARY REVIEW PROCESS CONDUCTED FOR ALL ZONING-RELATED CASES TO DETERMINE IF THE INFORMATION IN THE APPLICATION MATERIALS IS SUFFICIENT TO ADEQUATELY EVALUATE THE PROPOSAL. IF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING DETERMINES THAT IT NEEDS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND/OR CLARIFICATIONS, IT SHALL SO NOTIFY THE APPLICANT IN WRITING WITHIN 14 DAYS OF RECEIVING THE APPLICATION. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION INFORMATION IS DETERMINED TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE INITIAL FORMAL EVALUATION, THE CASE SHALL BE CONSIDERED OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED FOR SCHEDULING PURPOSES.
- e. WITHIN 14 DAYS OF OFFICIALLY ACCEPTING THE CASE FOR SCHEDULING PURPOSES, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL SCHEDULE A REQUIRED FORMAL PROJECT MEETING WITH THE PETITIONER AND/OR THE PETITIONER'S PROJECT TEAM IF:
- (1) THE PETITIONER HAS NOT HELD INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING TO DISCUSS

THE OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THE FORMAL APPLICATION, OR

- (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING HAS CONCERNS REGARDING THE USE, DESIGN, AND OR SCOPE OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT THAT HAVE CHANGED FROM WHAT WAS DISCUSSED, INDICATED, AND/OR SHOWN DURING THE INFORMAL MEETING(S).

- f. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING TO BE SUITABLY IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.Q.1, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PETITIONER, THE PETITIONER MAY SCHEDULE TO HAVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BE REVIEWED BY THE SUBDIVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE (SRC) AT A REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE SRC. THE PURPOSE OF THIS OPTIONAL SRC REVIEW WOULD BE FOR THE PETITIONER TO HAVE ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANY ISSUES IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT THAT WOULD NOT COMPLY WITH ALL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF ANY OF THE REVIEWING AGENCIES.
- g. AT THE POINT THAT THE PETITIONER DECIDES TO PROCEED WITH THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AND SO NOTIFIES THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL SCHEDULE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT FOR A PLANNING BOARD HEARING. THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL PREPARE A TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT ON THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, AND FORMALLY ISSUE THIS TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED PLANNING BOARD HEARING.
- h. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL HOLD ITS PUBLIC HEARING ON THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AND MAY TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ANY COMMENTS PRESENTED AT THAT PUBLIC HEARING. THE PLANNING BOARD MAY:
 - (1) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS PROPOSED, BASED UPON FINDINGS THAT THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 128.0.Q.1;
 - (2) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WITH REVISIONS OR CONDITIONS, BASED UPON FINDINGS THAT THE REVISED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 128.0.Q.1; OR
 - (3) DENY THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
- i. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL ISSUE ITS FORMAL DECISION ON THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IN A DECISION AND ORDER. IF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IS APPROVED, ALL APPROVED EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT SHALL BE STAMPED AS

APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD AND SIGNED BY THE PLANNING BOARD CHAIRPERSON.

- j. NO SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHALL BE APPROVED FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT UNLESS THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONFORMS SUBSTANTIALLY TO ALL EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BELOW FOR PRE-AUTHORIZED MINOR MODIFICATIONS, ANY MODIFICATIONS TO ANY PLANNING BOARD APPROVED FEATURES OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT MUST BE APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD:

- (1) MINOR ADDITIONS TO STRUCTURES, WITH A FLOOR AREA NO LARGER THAN 10% OF THE EXISTING FLOOR AREA OF THE MAIN FLOOR, NOT TO EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET.
- (2) MINOR NEW ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IF THE LOCATION DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE EXISTING APPROVED SITE LAYOUT (E.G. CIRCULATION, PARKING, LOADING, STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING OR BUFFERING).
- (3) MINOR ADDITIONS TO PARKING LOTS COMPRISING NO MORE THAN 25% OF THE ORIGINAL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES REQUIRED, NOT TO EXCEED 25 SPACES.
- (4) CLEARING OR GRADING THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET IN AREA.
- (5) SIMILAR MINOR MODIFICATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING, INCLUDING REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND THE INTENSITY OF THE UNIT MIX.

4. **ADDITIONAL USES PERMITTED FOR OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS.** OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY SET FORTH IN SECTION 128.0.Q.2 SHALL BE ELIGIBLE TO INCLUDE ANY USES SET FORTH IN THIS SECTION:

- a. USES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT
- (1) EXCEPT FOR THOSE EXCLUDED USES LISTED IN SECTION 128.0.Q.4.B BELOW, ALL OTHER USE CATEGORIES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS ARE PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT, PROVIDED THAT THE USE CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
 - (2) SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS, BUT ARE CONSIDERED TO BE EQUIVALENT TO AND/OR COMPATIBLE WITH THE PERMITTED USE CATEGORIES, PROVIDED THAT THE SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN

PROJECT AND PROVIDED THAT THE SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES ARE NOT USES LISTED IN SECTION 128.0.Q.4.B BELOW.

- b. EXCLUDED USES
 - (1) ADULT LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS
 - (2) BUS TERMINALS
 - (3) DWELLINGS, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION 128.0.Q.4.C
 - (4) FUNERAL HOMES AND MORTUARIES
 - (5) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND PAINTING FACILITIES, INCLUDING FULL BODY REPAIR AND INCIDENTAL SALE OF PARTS
 - (6) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM EQUIPMENT SALES
 - (7) MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION STATIONS
 - (8) MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS OR TIRE STORE, INCLUDING INSTALLATION FACILITIES
 - (9) MOTOR VEHICLE TOWING AND STORAGE FACILITIES
 - (10) NURSING HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES
 - (11) PRIVATE PARKS, SWIMMING POOLS, PLAYGROUNDS, ATHLETIC FIELDS, TENNIS COURTS, BASKETBALL COURTS, AND SIMILAR PRIVATE, NONCOMMERCIAL RECREATION FACILITIES
 - (12) RELIGIOUS FACILITIES, STRUCTURES AND LAND USED PRIMARILY FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES
 - (13) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE DRIVE-THROUGH SERVICE, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION 128.0.Q.4.C
 - (14) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION 128.0.Q.4.C
 - (15) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS
- c. INTEGRATED-DESIGN USES SUBJECT TO AUTHORIZATION
 - (1) THE FOLLOWING USES MAY BE AUTHORIZED AS PERMITTED USES IN ANY OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE AFOREMENTIONED CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY, PROVIDED THAT IT IS FOUND THAT THEY ARE CREATIVELY INTEGRATED INTO THE PROJECT'S ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DESIGN AND ARE SPECIFICALLY APPROVED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT:
 - (a) MOTOR VEHICLE FUELING FACILITY
 - (b) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE DRIVE-THROUGH SERVICE
 - (c) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
- d. ACCESSORY USES IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT

- (1) ONLY AS SPECIFICALLY ESTABLISHED WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
5. **OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BULK REGULATIONS. AS SPECIFICALLY ESTABLISHED WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF ANY STRUCTURE SHALL NOT EXCEED 65 FEET.**

Example of How Text Would Appear if Adopted:

Amendment to Section 103.0.O (Definitions) Amending definition of “Optional Design Project”

Optional Design Project: An Optional Design Project is an alternative development proposal wherein the permitted land uses, the associated land use regulations, the development design, and other intended characteristics for the development site are initially drafted through a deliberative planning process between the developer and the Department of Planning and Zoning, and ultimately subject to final approval by the Planning Board.

Amendment to Section 128.0 (Supplementary Zoning District Regulations) Adding Section 128.0.Q: "Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor"

§128.0.Q Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor

1. **Purpose and Applicability.** The purpose of this subsection is to expand the Optional Design Project process to all commercial properties fronting U.S. Route 1 with a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres. The intent of the Optional Design Project process is to serve as a catalyst for reinvestment and redevelopment along the Route 1 Corridor by encouraging innovative, high-quality design and coordinated site planning. Optional Design Projects promote integrated development that reflects the goals and design principles of the Route 1 Corridor Design Manual and advances Howard County’s adopted revitalization and economic development objectives. The Optional Design Project process provides for individualized and comprehensive review of project proposals to encourage creative redevelopment that responds to site-specific conditions and context, minimizes isolated or disconnected buildings and pad sites, and achieves cohesive, context-sensitive design outcomes that enhance the character and functionality of the Route 1 Corridor.
2. **Conditions of Eligibility.** The optional design project process prescribed in this Section shall be permitted only when the proposed project (a) brings the site into conformance with the Route 1 Manual and current site development requirements; (b) consists of a parcel or assemblage of parcels having a total lot area of less than ten (10) acres; (c) fronts on U.S. Route 1; and (d) satisfies the purpose set forth in Section 128.0.Q.1.
3. **Procedure for Approval of an Optional Design Project.** Projects that satisfy the eligibility requirements of Section 128.0.Q.2 may proceed under the following Optional Design Project process:
 - a. The owner of an interest in a tract of land may submit an application for an Optional Design Project. Prior to preparing a specific plan and submitting an application, the petitioner is encouraged to meet with the Department of Planning and Zoning on an informal basis to discuss the overall concept for the intended Optional Design Project.
 - b. Prior to filing a formal application for an Optional Design Project, the petitioner shall present the Optional Design Project plan to the Design Advisory Panel for evaluation in accordance with the procedures established in Section 16.1500 of the Howard County Code. The Design Advisory Panel recommendations shall be included in the Technical Staff Report produced by the Department of Planning

and Zoning and forwarded to the Planning Board for its consideration of the Optional Design Project.

- c. The formal application shall be submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning and shall include:

(1) An Optional Design Project plan which includes sheets depicting all existing natural and current development features of the land area to be included in the Optional Design Project, and also depicting and/or listing, as may be appropriate, the following for the proposed Optional Design Project:

- (a) A boundary survey
 - (b) Permitted uses
 - (c) Accessory uses
 - (d) Buildings
 - (e) Structures
 - (f) Parking areas and number of parking spaces
 - (g) Points and widths of vehicular ingress and egress
 - (h) On-site pedestrian-related features and connections to off-site pedestrian-related features
 - (i) Landscaping
 - (j) Hardscaping
 - (k) Retained natural features such as wetlands, steep slopes, and tree and forest cover
 - (l) Architectural elevations of all sides of all buildings and significant structures with exterior materials specified
 - (m) Exterior lighting plan with lighting structures and light sources given on specific lighting product information sheets
 - (n) Information on the adjoining properties, including the owner name, zoning, existing use, and existing site improvements
- (2) A written justification statement that expresses in detail:
- (a) How the proposed Optional Design Project conforms to the purpose statement in Section 128.0.Q.1.
 - (b) How the proposed optional design project will enhance and not overwhelm the surrounding community.
 - (c) How the proposed Optional Design Project will be a benefit to Howard County that is greater than a conventional development on the property using the underlying zoning district regulations.
 - (d) Supporting documentation, including but not limited to market studies and traffic studies.

- d. The submitted Optional Design Project application will be assigned an Optional Design Project case number and the application shall be subject to the standard preliminary review process conducted for all zoning-related cases to determine if the information in the application materials is sufficient to adequately evaluate the proposal. If the Department of Planning and Zoning determines that it needs additional information and/or clarifications, it shall so notify the applicant in writing within 14 days of receiving the application. Once the Optional Design Project application information is determined to be sufficient for the initial formal

- evaluation, the case shall be considered officially accepted for scheduling purposes.
- e. Within 14 days of officially accepting the case for scheduling purposes, the Department of Planning and Zoning shall schedule a required formal project meeting with the petitioner and/or the petitioner's project team if:
 - (1) The petitioner has not held informal meetings with the Department of Planning and Zoning to discuss the overall concept for the intended Optional Design Project prior to submitting the formal application, or
 - (2) The Department of Planning and Zoning has concerns regarding the use, design, and or scope of the Optional Design Project that have changed from what was discussed, indicated, and/or shown during the informal meeting(s).
 - f. Once the Optional Design Project is determined by the Department of Planning and Zoning to be suitably in conformance with the purpose statement in Section 128.0.Q.1, at the discretion of the Petitioner, the Petitioner may schedule to have the Optional Design Project be reviewed by the Subdivision Review Committee (SRC) at a regularly scheduled meeting of the SRC. The purpose of this optional SRC review would be for the petitioner to have advance notice of any issues in the Optional Design Project that would not comply with all technical requirements of any of the reviewing agencies.
 - g. At the point that the Petitioner decides to proceed with the Optional Design Project and so notifies the Department of Planning and Zoning, the Department of Planning and Zoning shall schedule the Optional Design Project for a Planning Board hearing. Department of Planning and Zoning shall prepare a Technical Staff Report on the Optional Design Project, and formally issue this Technical Staff Report at least two weeks prior to the scheduled Planning Board hearing.
 - h. The Planning Board shall hold its public hearing on the Optional Design Project and may take into consideration any comments presented at that public hearing. The Planning Board may:
 - (1) Approve the Optional Design Project as proposed, based upon findings that the proposed Optional Design Project will accomplish the purposes of Section 128.0.Q.1;
 - (2) Approve the Optional Design Project with revisions or conditions, based upon findings that the revised Optional Design Project will accomplish the purposes of Section 128.0.Q.1; or
 - (3) Deny the Optional Design Project.
 - i. The Planning Board shall issue its formal decision on the Optional Design Project in a decision and order. If the Optional Design Project is approved, all approved exhibits of the Optional Design Project shall be stamped as approved by the Planning Board and signed by the Planning Board chairperson.
 - j. No Site Development Plan shall be approved for an Optional Design Project unless the Site Development Plan conforms substantially to all exhibits of the Optional Design Project as approved by the Planning Board. Except as provided below for pre-authorized minor modifications, any modifications to any Planning Board approved features of the Optional Design Project must be approved by the Planning Board:

- (1) Minor additions to structures, with a floor area no larger than 10% of the existing floor area of the main floor, not to exceed 5,000 square feet.
 - (2) Minor new accessory structures if the location does not interfere with the existing approved site layout (e.g. circulation, parking, loading, storm water management facilities, open space, landscaping or buffering).
 - (3) Minor additions to parking lots comprising no more than 25% of the original number of parking spaces required, not to exceed 25 spaces.
 - (4) Clearing or grading that does not exceed 5,000 square feet in area.
 - (5) Similar minor modifications as determined by the department of planning and zoning, including reductions in the number of residential units and the intensity of the unit mix.
4. **Additional uses permitted for optional design projects.** Optional Design Projects that meet the conditions of eligibility set forth in Section 128.0.Q.2 shall be eligible to include any uses set forth in this section:
- a. Uses permitted as a matter of right in an Optional Design Project:
 - (1) Except for those excluded uses listed in Section 128.0.Q.4.b below, all other use categories permitted as a matter of right in the POR, B-1, and B-2 districts are permitted as a matter of right, provided that the use categories are authorized in an approved Optional Design Project.
 - (2) Special use categories that are not specifically permitted as a matter of right in the POR, B-1, and B-2 districts, but are considered to be equivalent to and/or compatible with the permitted use categories, provided that the special use categories are authorized in an approved Optional Design Project and provided that the special use categories are not uses listed in Section 128.0.Q.4.b below.
 - b. Excluded uses:
 - (1) Adult live entertainment establishments
 - (2) Bus terminals
 - (3) Dwellings, except as may be permitted under Section 128.0.Q.4.c
 - (4) Funeral homes and mortuaries
 - (5) Motor vehicle, construction equipment and farm equipment maintenance, repair and painting facilities, including full body repair and incidental sale of parts
 - (6) Motor vehicle, construction equipment and farm equipment sales
 - (7) Motor vehicle inspection stations
 - (8) Motor vehicle parts or tire store, including installation facilities
 - (9) Motor vehicle towing and storage facilities
 - (10) Nursing homes and residential care facilities
 - (11) Private parks, swimming pools, playgrounds, athletic fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and similar private, noncommercial recreation facilities
 - (12) Religious facilities, structures and land used primarily for religious activities
 - (13) Retail and commercial service uses which include drive-through service, except as may be permitted under Section 128.0.Q.4.c
 - (14) Schools, private academic, including colleges and universities, except as may be permitted under Section 128.0.Q.4.c

- (15) Volunteer fire departments
 - c. Integrated-design uses subject to authorization
 - (1) The following uses may be authorized as permitted uses in any Optional Design Projects that meet the aforementioned conditions of eligibility, provided that it is found that they are creatively integrated into the project's architectural and site design and are specifically approved in the Optional Design Project:
 - (a) Motor vehicle fueling facility.
 - (b) Retail and commercial service uses which include drive-through service.
 - (c) Schools, private academic, including colleges and universities.
 - d. Accessory uses in an Optional Design Project
 - (1) Only as specifically established with the approval of the optional design project.
5. **Optional design project bulk regulations.** As specifically established with the approval of the Optional Design Project, with the exception that the maximum height of any structure shall not exceed 65 feet.



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

Planning Board Meeting of March 5, 2026

Case No./Petitioner: ZRA-222 – Dean Gonzalez (10052 Washington Boulevard LLC)

Request: To amend Section 103.0, Definitions, by amending the definition of “Optional Design Project”.

To amend Section 128.0, Supplementary Zoning District Regulations, by creating a new subsection titled “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor.” This subsection would apply to all commercial properties that front Route 1 (Washington Boulevard) and are less than 10 acres in size. This would allow these properties to develop using the Optional Design Project process, which was developed for the Commercial Redevelopment (CR) overlay zoning district.

I. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF EXISTING ZONING REGULATIONS

The 2013 Comprehensive Zoning Plan created the CR overlay zoning district. The CR overlay district was established to create a flexible voluntary alternative zoning district that encourages commercial redevelopment of specifically designated properties on or near US Route 1. The goals of the CR overlay district are accomplished through the Optional Design Project process. The CR overlay district was established at appropriate locations near major US Route 1 intersections for specific targeted properties which have been determined to have high visibility, good access, or other advantages for furthering US Route 1 redevelopment and economic development. The CR overlay district is a mapped district which only may be proposed during the Comprehensive Zoning Plan process.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

This section contains a summary of the Petitioner’s proposed amendment. The Petitioner’s proposed amendment text is attached as Exhibit A.

The Petitioner states that the intent of the proposed amendment is to expand access to the existing Optional Design Project process for smaller parcels, providing flexibility for coordinated, high-quality redevelopment that strengthens corridor design, supports economic growth, and promotes long term reinvestment.

Sec. 103.0

This section contains the definitions. The Petitioner is proposing to amend the following definition:

- Amend the definition of Optional Design Project.
 - To remove the mention that an Optional Design Project is equivalent to a Planned Unit Development in the CR overlay zoning district.

Sec. 128.0.

The section contains the supplemental regulations for zoning districts with Section A-O outlining different provisions for certain zoning districts.

A separate Zoning Regulation Amendment (ZRA-221) is in process and has been proposed to create a new subsection “P” called “Adaptive Reuse and Redevelopment of Existing Hotel/Motel Sites in the Route 1 Corridor.” ZRA-222 has been drafted assuming ZRA-221 will be adopted creating a new subsection “P.”

The petitioner proposes adding a new subsection “Q” to expand the eligibility for Optional Design Projects to commercial properties along Route 1, subject to the following criteria:

- 1) The Property must have frontage on Route 1.
- 2) The parcel, or assemblage or parcels, must be less than ten (10) acres in size.

Properties that meet the above criteria would be eligible to develop using the Optional Design Project process with the following permitted uses if the development complies with the Route 1 Manual and current site development plan requirements:

- 1) All use categories permitted as a matter of right in the POR, B-1, and B-2 zoning districts, except for uses specifically listed as excluded.
- 2) Special use categories that are not specifically permitted as a matter of right in the POR, B-1, and B-2 districts, but are considered equivalent to and/or compatible with the permitted use categories, except for uses specifically listed as excluded.

III. EVALUATION OF PROPOSAL

This section contains the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) technical evaluation of ZRA-222 in accordance with Section 16.208.(d) of the Howard County Code.

1. The compatibility, including potential adverse impacts and consequences, of the proposed Zoning Regulation Amendment with the existing and potential uses of the surrounding areas and within the same zoning district.

This amendment expands the eligibility for Optional Design Projects for commercial properties with frontage on Route 1 that are less than 10 acres in size. The Optional Design Project process is a deliberative process that requires review by the Design Advisory Panel and approval by the Planning Board through a public hearing process. In its review, the Planning Board may take into consideration any comments presented at the public hearing and may approve the Optional Design Project based upon findings that the proposed Optional Design Project will accomplish the purposes of the regulation. Attachment “D” depicts the permitted uses within an Optional Design Project.

2. The properties to which the Zoning Regulation Amendment could apply and, if feasible, a map of the impacted properties.

The Petitioner has an interest in 10052 Washington Boulevard depicted by the map shown in Attachment “A”. There are approximately 48 parcels with the CR overlay zone that are eligible for development as an Optional Design Project, which are depicted in Attachment “B”.

However, this ZRA will apply to other commercial properties that front Route 1 and are less than 10 acres in size. The proposed ZRA could potentially impact approximately 133 properties, depicted by the map shown in Attachment “C”. This map shows parcels that front Route 1, are less than 10 acres in size and are assessed by the Department of Assessments and Taxation as a commercial use.

3. Conflicts in the Howard County Zoning Regulations as a result of the Zoning Regulation Amendment.

Currently, the Optional Design Project process can only be used in the CR overlay zoning district. This proposed ZRA expands the Optional Design Project process to not only the CR overlay zone, but to all commercial properties that front Route 1 and are less than 10 acres in size.

The ZRA is applicable to commercial properties. There are many parcels along Route 1 that are currently zoned or used industrially. Clarification should be provided by the Petitioner on whether this ZRA is intended to apply to industrial properties.

4. The compatibility of the proposed Zoning Regulation Amendment with the Policies and objectives, specifically including the environmental policies and objectives, of the Howard County General Plan.

The General Plan does not specifically address the Optional Design Project process for properties along Route 1. However, the General Plan recognizes that the Route 1 Corridor has a considerable number of underutilized properties with potential for redevelopment. HoCo By Design provides guidance for the future character of areas along Route 1 and identifies two “Activity Centers” – areas for higher-intensity mixed use redevelopment. ZRA-222 could potentially apply to 133 parcels along Route 1. These sites are in proximity to a variety of character areas along the corridor: Transit Activity Center, Industrial Mixed Use Activity Center, Suburban Commercial, Multi-Family Neighborhood, and Industrial. The Property is in proximity to the Transit Activity Center character area. For more detailed descriptions of HoCo By Design character areas, refer to the HoCo By Design Technical Appendix B.

In general, HoCo By Design aims to preserve and promote character in future and existing developments with context-sensitive design for varying development scales. The character-based planning approach outlined in the plan “prioritizes site design, public realm, building form and massing, and architecture over general land use and density” (TAB-1). HoCo By Design’s QBD-1 Policy Statement states: “Prioritize character and design in future development, recognizing variations in Howard County’s unique areas” (Page QBD-30).

Route 1 Corridor Plan

Like HoCo By Design, the Route 1 Corridor Plan supports revitalization and redevelopment along the corridor. The plan recognizes there are underutilized, blighted parcels that have high potential for redevelopment as mixed-use activity centers – including vacant properties. In general, the plan identifies a need for revitalization, placemaking, and connectivity in and around various neighborhoods throughout the corridor. Many of the potentially impacted properties are located in proximity to existing, newer mixed-use and residential developments or older neighborhoods. The Route 1 Corridor Plan recommends revitalization, placemaking, and connectivity be achieved by:

RTE 1-3 Policy Statement: Foster revitalization in the Route 1 Corridor:

- Implementing Action #1: Establish activity centers as identified on the Future Land Use Map that will concentrate future residential, commercial retail, light industrial, and traditional office development.
- Implementing Action #2: Implement zoning changes to achieve the vision of the Corridor.
 - Consider more flexibility.
- Implementing Action #3: Improve access to neighborhood services by connecting neighborhoods to retail in the Corridor.
- Implementing Action #5: Encourage property maintenance and the reduction of blight.

RTE 1-4 Policy Statement: Increase opportunities for reinvestment of commercial and industrial properties in the Route 1 Corridor to address blight through new and existing zoning tools and tax credits.

RTE 1-6 Policy Statement: Encourage building architecture in the Route 1 Corridor that is unique in Howard County.

Conclusion

The proposed ZRA may help advance General Plan and Route 1 Corridor Plan goals, to the extent that Optional Design Projects support revitalization, placemaking, connectivity, context-sensitive design, reinvestment in blighted properties, and opportunities for retail, employment, and mixed-use activity centers.

Environmental Policies and Objectives

The proposed ZRA-222 is not in conflict with the environmental policies and objectives in HoCo By Design. The proposed ZRA-222 would not change any development requirements for sensitive resource protection, stormwater management or forest conservation.

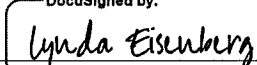
DocuSigned by:

Lynda P. Eisenberg, AICP, Director 2/19/2026 Date

Exhibit A

Petitioner’s Proposed Text

(CAPITALS indicate text to be added; text in [[brackets]] indicates text to be deleted.)

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Howard County Zoning Regulations.

Section 103.0. Definitions

Optional Design Project: [[The equivalent of a Planned Unit Development in a CR Zoning District, an]] AN Optional Design Project is an alternative development proposal wherein the permitted land uses, the associated land use regulations, the development design, and other intended characteristics for the development site are initially drafted through a deliberative planning process between the developer and the Department of Planning and Zoning, and ultimately subject to final approval by the Planning Board.

Section 128.0. Supplementary Zoning District Regulations

Q. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS IN ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR

1. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY. THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSECTION IS TO EXPAND THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS TO ALL COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES FRONTING U.S. ROUTE 1, WITH A TOTAL LOT AREA OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES. THE INTENT OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS IS TO SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR REINVESTMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ALONG THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR BY ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN AND COORDINATED SITE PLANNING. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS PROMOTE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT THAT REFLECTS THE GOALS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR DESIGN MANUAL AND ADVANCES HOWARD COUNTY'S ADOPTED REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PROVIDES FOR INDIVIDUALIZED AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT THAT RESPONDS TO SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT, MINIMIZES ISOLATED OR DISCONNECTED BUILDINGS AND PAD SITES, AND ACHIEVES COHESIVE, CONTEXT-SENSITIVE

1 DESIGN OUTCOMES THAT ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND FUNCTIONALITY OF
2 THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR.

3 2. CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY. THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS
4 PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHEN THE PROPOSED
5 PROJECT (A) BRINGS THE SITE INTO CONFORMANCE WITH THE ROUTE 1 MANUAL
6 AND CURRENT SITE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS; (B) CONSISTS OF A PARCEL
7 OR ASSEMBLAGE OF PARCELS HAVING A TOTAL LOT AREA OF LESS THAN TEN
8 (10) ACRES; (C) FRONTS ON U.S. ROUTE 1; AND (D) SATISFIES THE PURPOSE SET
9 FORTH IN SECTION 128.0.Q.1.

10 3. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT. PROJECTS
11 THAT SATISFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 128.0.Q.2 MAY
12 PROCEED UNDER THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS:

13 a. THE OWNER OF AN INTEREST IN A TRACT OF LAND MAY SUBMIT AN
14 APPLICATION FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT. PRIOR TO PREPARING A
15 SPECIFIC PLAN AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION, THE PETITIONER IS
16 ENCOURAGED TO MEET WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
17 ZONING ON AN INFORMAL BASIS TO DISCUSS THE OVERALL CONCEPT FOR
18 THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

19 b. PRIOR TO FILING A FORMAL APPLICATION FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN
20 PROJECT, THE PETITIONER SHALL PRESENT THE OPTIONAL DESIGN
21 PROJECT PLAN TO THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL FOR EVALUATION IN
22 ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 16.1500
23 OF THE HOWARD COUNTY CODE. THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL
24 RECOMMENDATIONS SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE TECHNICAL STAFF
25 REPORT PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
26 AND FORWARDED TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR ITS CONSIDERATION OF
27 THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

28 c. THE FORMAL APPLICATION SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT
29 OF PLANNING AND ZONING AND SHALL INCLUDE:

30 (1) AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES SHEETS
31 DEPICTING ALL EXISTING NATURAL AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENT
32 FEATURES OF THE LAND AREA TO BE INCLUDED IN THE OPTIONAL

1 DESIGN PROJECT, AND ALSO DEPICTING AND/OR LISTING, AS MAY
2 BE APPROPRIATE, THE FOLLOWING FOR THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL
3 DESIGN PROJECT:

4 (a) A BOUNDARY SURVEY

5 (b) PERMITTED USES

6 (c) ACCESSORY USES

7 (d) BUILDINGS

8 (e) STRUCTURES

9 (f) PARKING AREAS AND NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES

10 (g) POINTS AND WIDTHS OF VEHICULAR INGRESS AND
11 EGRESS

12 (h) ON-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES AND
13 CONNECTIONS TO OFF-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED
14 FEATURES

15 (i) LANDSCAPING

16 (j) HARDSCAPING

17 (k) RETAINED NATURAL FEATURES SUCH AS WETLANDS,
18 STEEP SLOPES, AND TREE AND FOREST COVER

19 (l) ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATIONS OF ALL SIDES OF ALL
20 BUILDINGS AND SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES WITH EXTERIOR
21 MATERIALS SPECIFIED

22 (m) EXTERIOR LIGHTING PLAN WITH LIGHTING STRUCTURES
23 AND LIGHT SOURCES GIVEN ON SPECIFIC LIGHTING
24 PRODUCT INFORMATION SHEETS

25 (n) INFORMATION ON THE ADJOINING PROPERTIES,
26 INCLUDING THE OWNER NAME, ZONING, EXISTING USE, AND
27 EXISTING SITE IMPROVEMENTS

28 (2) A WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT THAT EXPRESSES IN
29 DETAIL:

30 (a) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT
31 CONFORMS TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN SECTION
32 128.0.Q.1.

1 (b) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL
2 ENHANCE AND NOT OVERWHELM THE SURROUNDING
3 COMMUNITY.

4 (c) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL BE
5 A BENEFIT TO HOWARD COUNTY THAT IS GREATER THAN A
6 CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE PROPERTY USING
7 THE UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS.

8 (d) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, INCLUDING BUT NOT
9 LIMITED TO MARKET STUDIES AND TRAFFIC STUDIES.

10 d. THE SUBMITTED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION WILL BE
11 ASSIGNED AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CASE NUMBER AND THE
12 APPLICATION SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE STANDARD PRELIMINARY
13 REVIEW PROCESS CONDUCTED FOR ALL ZONING-RELATED CASES TO
14 DETERMINE IF THE INFORMATION IN THE APPLICATION MATERIALS IS
15 SUFFICIENT TO ADEQUATELY EVALUATE THE PROPOSAL. IF THE
16 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING DETERMINES THAT IT NEEDS
17 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND/OR CLARIFICATIONS, IT SHALL SO
18 NOTIFY THE APPLICANT IN WRITING WITHIN 14 DAYS OF RECEIVING THE
19 APPLICATION. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION
20 INFORMATION IS DETERMINED TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE INITIAL
21 FORMAL EVALUATION, THE CASE SHALL BE CONSIDERED OFFICIALLY
22 ACCEPTED FOR SCHEDULING PURPOSES.

23 e. WITHIN 14 DAYS OF OFFICIALLY ACCEPTING THE CASE FOR
24 SCHEDULING PURPOSES, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
25 SHALL SCHEDULE A REQUIRED FORMAL PROJECT MEETING WITH THE
26 PETITIONER AND/OR THE PETITIONER'S PROJECT TEAM IF:

- 27 (1) THE PETITIONER HAS NOT HELD INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH THE
28 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING TO DISCUSS THE
29 OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN
30 PROJECT PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THE FORMAL APPLICATION, OR
31 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING HAS CONCERNS
32 REGARDING THE USE, DESIGN, AND OR SCOPE OF THE OPTIONAL

1 DESIGN PROJECT THAT HAVE CHANGED FROM WHAT WAS
 2 DISCUSSED, INDICATED, AND/OR SHOWN DURING THE INFORMAL
 3 MEETING(S).

4 f. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IS DETERMINED BY THE
 5 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING TO BE SUITABLY IN
 6 CONFORMANCE WITH THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.Q.1, AT
 7 THE DISCRETION OF THE PETITIONER, THE PETITIONER MAY SCHEDULE TO
 8 HAVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BE REVIEWED BY THE
 9 SUBDIVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE (SRC) AT A REGULARLY SCHEDULED
 10 MEETING OF THE SRC. THE PURPOSE OF THIS OPTIONAL SRC REVIEW
 11 WOULD BE FOR THE PETITIONER TO HAVE ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANY
 12 ISSUES IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT THAT WOULD NOT COMPLY
 13 WITH ALL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF ANY OF THE REVIEWING
 14 AGENCIES.

15 g. AT THE POINT THAT THE PETITIONER DECIDES TO PROCEED WITH THE
 16 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AND SO NOTIFIES THE DEPARTMENT OF
 17 PLANNING AND ZONING, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
 18 SHALL SCHEDULE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT FOR A PLANNING
 19 BOARD HEARING. THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL
 20 PREPARE A TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT ON THE OPTIONAL DESIGN
 21 PROJECT, AND FORMALLY ISSUE THIS TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT AT
 22 LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED PLANNING BOARD
 23 HEARING.

24 h. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL HOLD ITS PUBLIC HEARING ON THE
 25 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AND MAY TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ANY
 26 COMMENTS PRESENTED AT THAT PUBLIC HEARING. THE PLANNING
 27 BOARD MAY:

28 (1) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS PROPOSED, BASED
 29 UPON FINDINGS THAT THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT
 30 WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 128.0.Q.1;

31 (2) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WITH REVISIONS OR
 32 CONDITIONS, BASED UPON FINDINGS THAT THE REVISED OPTIONAL

1 DESIGN PROJECT WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION
2 128.0.Q.1; OR
3 (3) DENY THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
4 i. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL ISSUE ITS FORMAL DECISION ON THE
5 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IN A DECISION AND ORDER. IF THE OPTIONAL
6 DESIGN PROJECT IS APPROVED, ALL APPROVED EXHIBITS OF THE
7 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT SHALL BE STAMPED AS APPROVED BY THE
8 PLANNING BOARD AND SIGNED BY THE PLANNING BOARD CHAIRPERSON.
9 j. NO SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHALL BE APPROVED FOR AN OPTIONAL
10 DESIGN PROJECT UNLESS THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONFORMS
11 SUBSTANTIALLY TO ALL EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS
12 APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BELOW FOR
13 PRE-AUTHORIZED MINOR MODIFICATIONS, ANY MODIFICATIONS TO ANY
14 PLANNING BOARD APPROVED FEATURES OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN
15 PROJECT MUST BE APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD:
16 (1) MINOR ADDITIONS TO STRUCTURES, WITH A FLOOR AREA NO
17 LARGER THAN 10% OF THE EXISTING FLOOR AREA OF THE MAIN
18 FLOOR, NOT TO EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET.
19 (2) MINOR NEW ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IF THE LOCATION DOES
20 NOT INTERFERE WITH THE EXISTING APPROVED SITE LAYOUT (E.G.
21 CIRCULATION, PARKING, LOADING, STORM WATER MANAGEMENT
22 FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING OR BUFFERING).
23 (3) MINOR ADDITIONS TO PARKING LOTS COMPRISING NO MORE
24 THAN 25% OF THE ORIGINAL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES
25 REQUIRED, NOT TO EXCEED 25 SPACES.
26 (4) CLEARING OR GRADING THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE
27 FEET IN AREA.
28 (5) SIMILAR MINOR MODIFICATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE
29 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING, INCLUDING
30 REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND THE
31 INTENSITY OF THE UNIT MIX.

1 4. ADDITIONAL USES PERMITTED FOR OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS. OPTIONAL
2 DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY SET FORTH IN
3 SECTION 128.0.Q.2 SHALL BE ELIGIBLE TO INCLUDE ANY USES SET FORTH IN THIS
4 SECTION:

5 a. USES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN
6 PROJECT

7 (1) EXCEPT FOR THOSE EXCLUDED USES LISTED IN SECTION
8 128.0.Q.4.B BELOW, ALL OTHER USE CATEGORIES PERMITTED AS A
9 MATTER OF RIGHT IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS ARE
10 PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT, PROVIDED THAT THE USE
11 CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN APPROVED OPTIONAL
12 DESIGN PROJECT.

13 (2) SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY
14 PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2
15 DISTRICTS, BUT ARE CONSIDERED TO BE EQUIVALENT TO AND/OR
16 COMPATIBLE WITH THE PERMITTED USE CATEGORIES, PROVIDED
17 THAT THE SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN
18 APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AND PROVIDED THAT THE
19 SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES ARE NOT USES LISTED IN SECTION
20 128.0.Q.4.B BELOW.

21 b. EXCLUDED USES

22 (1) ADULT LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS

23 (2) BUS TERMINALS

24 (3) DWELLINGS, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
25 128.0.Q.4.C

26 (4) FUNERAL HOMES AND MORTUARIES

27 (5) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM
28 EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND PAINTING FACILITIES,
29 INCLUDING FULL BODY REPAIR AND INCIDENTAL SALE OF PARTS

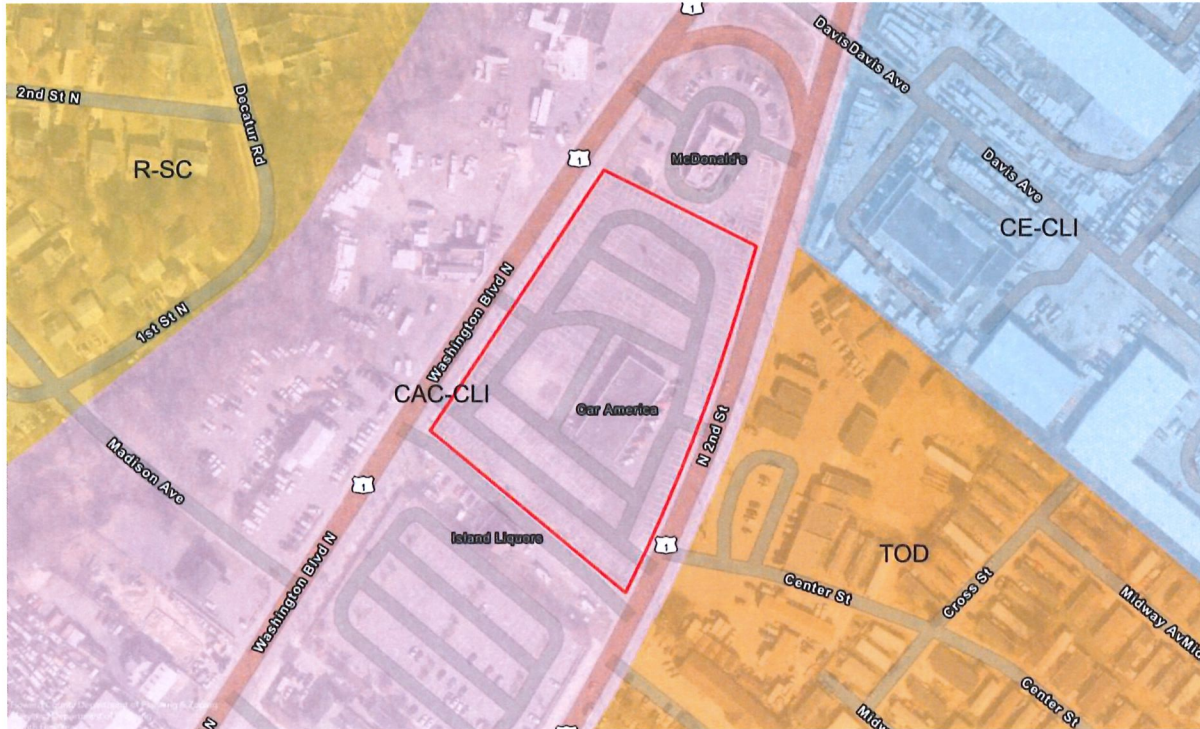
30 (6) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM
31 EQUIPMENT SALES

32 (7) MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION STATIONS

-
- 1 (8) MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS OR TIRE STORE, INCLUDING
2 INSTALLATION FACILITIES
3 (9) MOTOR VEHICLE TOWING AND STORAGE FACILITIES
4 (10) NURSING HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES
5 (11) PRIVATE PARKS, SWIMMING POOLS, PLAYGROUNDS, ATHLETIC
6 FIELDS, TENNIS COURTS, BASKETBALL COURTS, AND SIMILAR
7 PRIVATE, NONCOMMERCIAL RECREATION FACILITIES
8 (12) RELIGIOUS FACILITIES, STRUCTURES AND LAND USED
9 PRIMARILY FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES
10 (13) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE
11 DRIVE-THROUGH SERVICE, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER
12 SECTION 128.0.Q.4.C
13 (14) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND
14 UNIVERSITIES, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
15 128.0.Q.4.C
16 (15) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS
17 c. INTEGRATED-DESIGN USES SUBJECT TO AUTHORIZATION
18 (1) THE FOLLOWING USES MAY BE AUTHORIZED AS PERMITTED
19 USES IN ANY OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE
20 AFOREMENTIONED CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY, PROVIDED THAT
21 IT IS FOUND THAT THEY ARE CREATIVELY INTEGRATED INTO THE
22 PROJECT'S ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DESIGN AND ARE
23 SPECIFICALLY APPROVED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT:
24 (a) MOTOR VEHICLE FUELING FACILITY
25 (b) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH
26 INCLUDE DRIVE-THROUGH SERVICE
27 (c) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES
28 AND UNIVERSITIES
29 d. ACCESSORY USES IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT
30 (1) ONLY AS SPECIFICALLY ESTABLISHED WITH THE APPROVAL OF
31 THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

1 5. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BULK REGULATIONS. AS SPECIFICALLY
2 ESTABLISHED WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, WITH
3 THE EXCEPTION THAT THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF ANY STRUCTURE SHALL NOT
4 EXCEED 65 FEET.

Attachment A



Zoning & Vicinity

10052 WASHINGTON BLVD

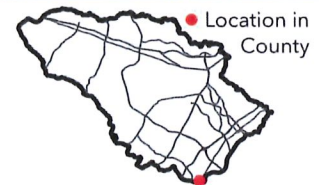
ZRA-222

- Zoning
- CAC-CLI
 - CE-CLI

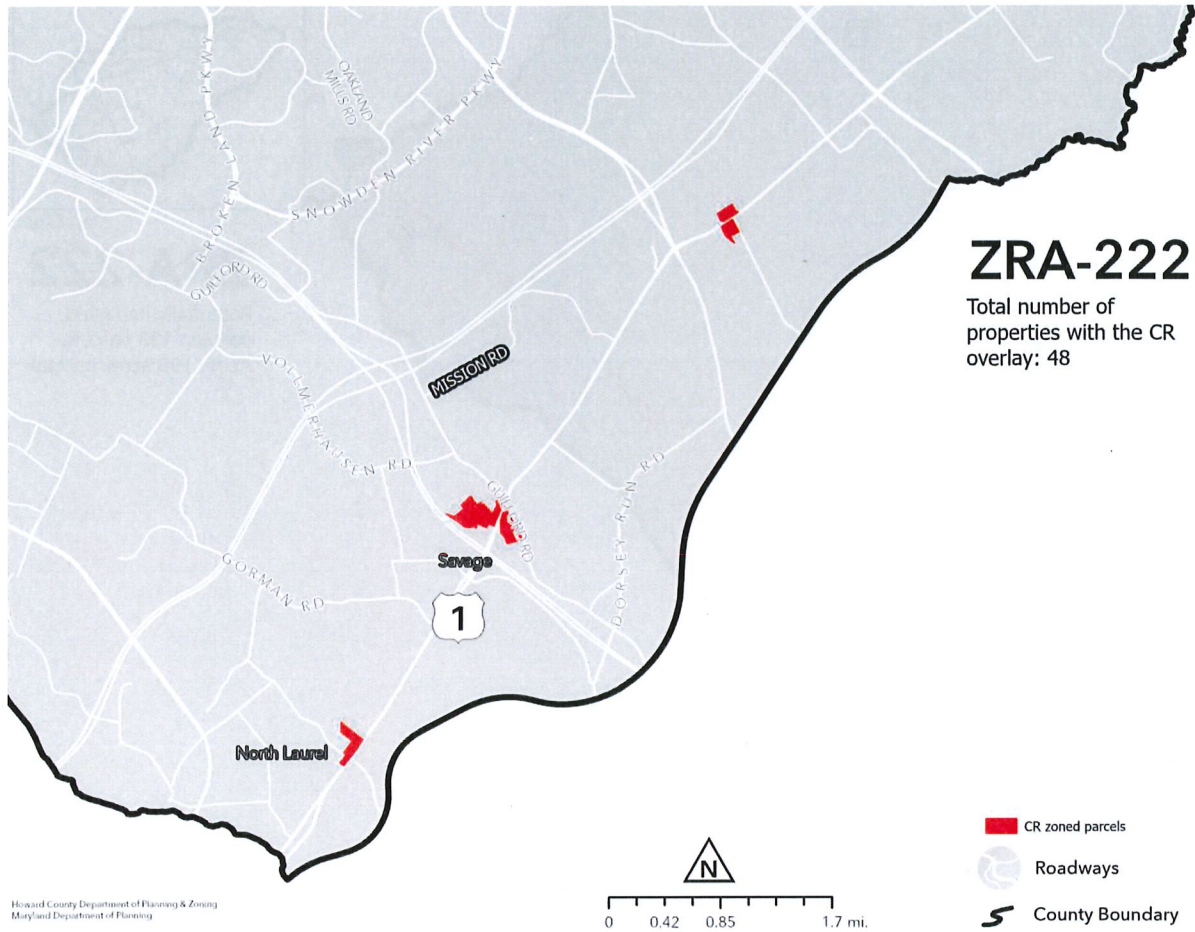
- R-SC
- TOD
- Subject Property



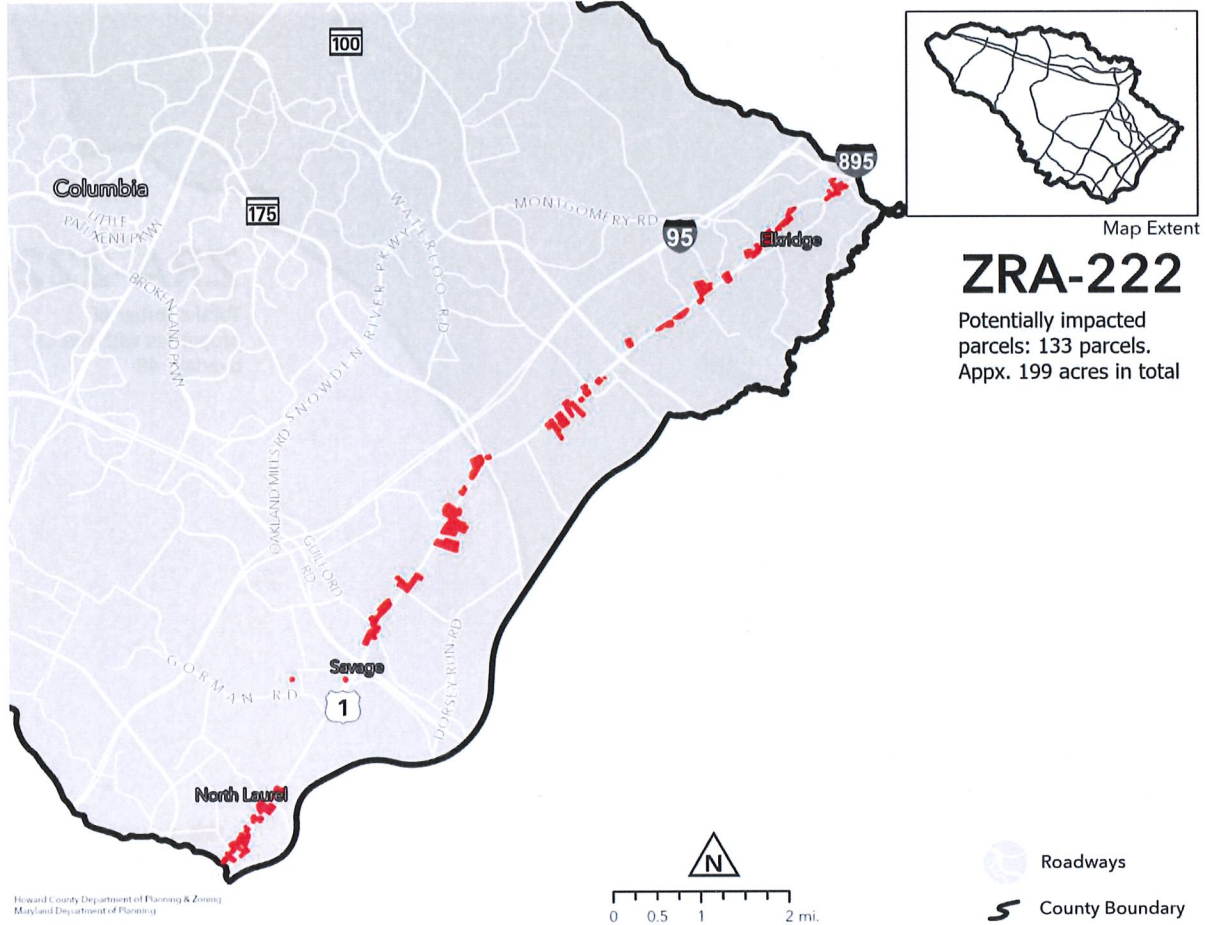
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, ©OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Attachment B



Attachment C



Attachment D

Permitted Uses	District
Permitted by right in an Optional Design Project only	POR, B-1, B-2
Permitted uses not in an Optional Design Project	Uses and accessory uses permitted in the underlying zoning district
Excluded uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult live entertainment • Bus terminals • Dwellings • Funeral homes • Motor vehicle repair • Motor vehicle sales • Motor vehicle inspection stations • Motor vehicle parts and tire sales • Motor vehicle towing and storage facilities • Nursing homes and residential care • Private parks • Religious facilities • Retail and commercial service uses • Schools • Volunteer fire departments
Integrated-Design Uses Subject to Authorization	<p>The following uses may be authorized as permitted uses in any Optional Design Projects provided that it is found that they are creatively integrated into the project’s architectural and site design and are specifically approved in the Optional Design Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor vehicle fueling facility • Retail and commercial service uses which include drive-through service • Schools, private academic, including colleges and universities

1 **DEAN GONZALEZ** * **BEFORE THE**
 2 **10052 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD, LLC** * **PLANNING BOARD OF**
 3 **PETITIONER** * **HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND**
 4 **ZRA-222** *

7 * * * * *

8 **MOTION: Recommend approval of ZRA-222**

9 **ACTION: *Approved; Vote 5-0.***

10 * * * * *

11 **RECOMMENDATION**

12 On March 5, 2026, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, considered the petition of Dean
 13 Gonzalez (10052 Washington Boulevard, LLC, the Petitioner, to amend the Definitions, Sec. 103.0. for
 14 Optional Design Projects, and to amend the Supplemental Regulations, Sec. 128.0, of the Howard County
 15 Zoning Regulations by adding a new provision titled “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor”. The
 16 purpose of this ZRA is to expand access to the Optional Design Project process for smaller parcels, and provide
 17 flexibility for coordinated, high-quality redevelopment that strengthens the corridor design, supports economic
 18 growth and promotes long term reinvestment.

19 The Planning Board considered the petition and the Department of Planning and Zoning’s (DPZ)
 20 Technical Staff Report (TSR).

21 **Testimony**

22
 23 Mr. Justin Tyler, DPZ staff member, presented the proposed Zoning Regulation Amendment (ZRA).
 24 He explained the proposed text changes, and the history of the Commercial Redevelopment (CR) overlay
 25 district. He discussed the Property the Petitioner has interest in and listed the permitted uses within the CR
 26 overlay. Mr. Tyler discussed the review criteria and explained that the proposed changes may impact all
 27 commercial properties with frontage on Route 1, and how the CR overlay can only be mapped during the
 28 Comprehensive Zoning process. He also explained the compatibility of the proposed ZRA with the policies of
 29 the General Plan and the Route 1 Corridor Manual, specifically the policies that support revitalization within
 30 the Route 1 Corridor.

31 Following DPZ’s presentation of the proposed amendment, Mr. Cecil, Planning Board Chair, asked the
 32 Board if they had questions for DPZ. Ms. Mande Heinl, the Petitioner’s representative, presented the proposed
 33 ZRA on behalf of the Petitioner, Mr. Dean Gonzalez (10052 Washington Boulevard, LLC). She stated that the
 34 purpose of this ZRA is to expand the eligibility for the Optional Design Project process for certain properties

1 within the Route 1 Corridor, including the Property the Petitioner has interest in, 10052 Washington Boulevard.
2 She testified that the County's adopted plans call for expanding the zoning tools to assist in the coordinated
3 redevelopment of Route 1. She asserted that the proposed ZRA will not create any new processes within the
4 Regulations but will help to expand eligibility to an already existing process. Ms. Heidl explained that if a
5 property is not within the CR overlay, it must go through the Comprehensive Zoning process which can be a
6 lengthy and possibly costly process for applicants. She indicated that the proposed ZRA will provide a more
7 practical pathway for properties that meet the defined eligibility criteria. She further explained the eligibility
8 requirements outlined in the proposed amendments. She asserts that the HoCo By Design and the Route 1
9 Corridor Plan recognize that larger parcels along Route 1 are intended to remain as employment hubs and that
10 this ZRA is structured in a way to not disrupt these areas but will instead be focused on smaller, fragmented
11 parcels. Ms. Heidl argued that the Optional Design Process is rarely utilized and that there was only one location
12 where this process was used. Ms. Heidl emphasized that the Route 1 Corridor Plan identifies the subject
13 Property as a site for redevelopment.

14 Following her testimony, Board member, Ms. Mosier asked DPZ about the property that had been
15 developed utilizing the Optional Design Project process. Ms. Eisenberg, Executive Secretary and Planning
16 Director stated that the parcel utilizing the Optional Design Process had been difficult to locate or reference.
17 Ms. Eisenberg further clarified that this process has not been utilized very often and you can only utilize the
18 process if you are within the CR overlay district. Ms. Mosier followed up by inquiring what the overall goal or
19 point of the Optional Design Process. Ms. Eisenberg explained that assuming the criteria have been met, allows
20 a property owner more creative flexibility for the design pattern in the redevelopment of a site. Ms. Mosier
21 asked what kinds of uses or developments could be made possible or would be more difficult if this process did
22 not exist. Ms. Heidl explained that the parcels that are smaller than 1 acre located within the Route 1 Corridor
23 are restricted by uses and bulk regulations that shrink the developable area. She stated that this amendment
24 allows property owners to develop a comprehensive plan to redevelop the sites and allows flexibility on site
25 layout and bulk regulations.

26 Board Chair, Mr. Cecil, expressed his concern with unintended consequences on properties within the
27 Corridor that may be zoned with a different designation such as TOD (Transit Oriented Development) which
28 may have different design requirements, and if they would be able to participate in the Optional Design Process.
29 Ms. Eisenberg stated that if the property owner chose to utilize this section and if their property met the criteria
30 for being along the Route 1 Corridor, they could utilize the Optional Design process; however, if they were
31 zoned TOD they would not be able to utilize the TOD and Optional Design Project process at the same time.
32 Ms. Heidl stated that a Howard County Council member indicated that there should be an acreage cap as to not
33 hinder the larger parcels for employment hubs, thus the reason for the 10-acre eligible cap criteria for the
34 Optional Design Process. Mr. David Moore, Howard County Office of Law, explained that if a pending map

1 amendment was denied, it could seek to utilize this amendment but only if it met the process criteria. Ms. Heidl
2 stated that any proposal for any project under this criterion would come back to the Planning Board for
3 evaluation. Mr. Cecil also stated that part of the criteria stated to enhance and not overwhelm the surrounding
4 community and wanted clarification on how the Board would interpret this. Ms. Heidl explained that the
5 language came directly from the existing Regulations outlining the process.

6 During the hearing, one member of the public testified. Ms. Laura Wisely spoke on behalf of the
7 Elkridge Community Alliance and stated that they are in support but are hesitant. She indicated that one of the
8 Group's main concerns was a lack of infrastructure and how this ZRA would reinvent the Route 1 Corridor.
9 She further testified that it is hard to envision the idea without plans.

10
11 Board Discussion and Recommendation

12
13 Chair Mr. Cecil inquired if there should be clarity on whether this amendment would apply to
14 commercial and industrial sites or only commercial. Ms. Heidl stated that this ZRA would apply to non-
15 residential uses along the Route 1 Corridor. Board Chair, Mr. Cecil, agreed that he interpreted the amendment
16 the same way, in that it would be applied to non-residential sites and that the existing criteria still allow the
17 Board to provide discretion when making determinations. Ms. Eisenberg further reiterated that the Optional
18 Design Project process criteria will continue to allow the Board to provide a formal decision-making authority
19 on the process. No other Board members had any additional questions or concerns with the proposed text
20 amendments.

21 Vice-Chair Mr. Godsey motioned to recommend approval of ZRA-222. Board member Mr. Tilburg
22 seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

23 For the foregoing reasons, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, on this 14th day of March
24 2026, recommends that ZRA-222, as described above, be APPROVED.

25
26 HOWARD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

27 Signed by:

28 *James Cecil*

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29 James Cecil, Chair

30 DocuSigned by:

31 *Mason Godsey*

B79ABA28B31447E...

32 Mason Godsey, Vice-chair
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34

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Signed by:
Barbara Mosier
985ABD04E0F040F...

Barbara Mosier

Signed by:
Lynn Moore
FB49E4A99072471

Lynn Moore (Virtual)

Signed by:
William Tilburg
62427B6131E44C6...

Willam Tilburg

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:
Lynda Eisenberg
4220B635863942E...

Lynda Eisenberg, AICP, Executive Secretary

Amendment 1 to Council Bill No. 24 - 2026

**BY: The Chairperson at the request
of 10052 Washington Blvd LLC**

**Legislative Day 6
Date: May 4, 2026**

Amendment No. 1

(This Amendment clarifies the applicability of the standards of review for the proposed expansion of the Optional Design Project process at the Planning Board level)

1 On page 5, in line 31 before the semi-colon, insert "AND SATISFIES THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN
2 SECTION 128.0.P.3.C2".

3

4 On page 6, in line 4 before the semi-colon, insert "AND SATISFIES THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN
5 SECTION 128.0.P.3.C2".

6

7

I certify that this a true copy of

Am 1 CB 24-2026
passed on May 4, 2026
Michelle D'Amico
Council Administrator

Introduced 04.06.2026
Public Hearing 04.20.2026
Council Action 05.04.2026
Executive Action _____
Effective Date _____

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2026 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 5

Bill No. 24 -2026 (ZRA-222)

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of 10052 Washington Boulevard, LLC.

SHORT TITLE: Optional Design Projects – Route 1 Corridor

AN ACT amending the Howard County Zoning Regulations to change the definition of “Optional Design Project”; add a new subsection in Section 128.0 entitled “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor”; expanding eligibility for the Optional Design Project process to certain commercial properties along Route 1; adding additional use criteria; and generally related to the Optional Design Project process.

Introduced and read first time April 6, 2026. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on April 20, 2026.

By order _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on May 4, 2026 and Passed _____, Passed with amendments _____, Failed _____.

By order _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 5 day of May, 2026 at 5:00 a.m./p.m.

By order _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive _____, 2026

Calvin Ball, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1 **Section 1. Be It Enacted** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that the Howard
2 County Zoning Regulations are amended as follows:

3 By amending:

4 Section 103.0.- “Definitions”

5 To amend the definition of “Optional Design Project”

6
7 By adding:

8 Section 128.0. - “Supplementary Zoning District Regulations”

9 New Subsection P. - “Optional Design Projects in Route 1 Corridor”

10
11 **Howard County Zoning Regulations**

12 **Section 103.0 Definitions**

13 **O**

14 Optional Design Project: [[The equivalent of a Planned Unit Development in a CR Zoning
15 District, an]] AN Optional Design Project is an alternative development proposal wherein the
16 permitted land uses, the associated land use regulations, the development design, and other
17 intended characteristics for the development site are initially drafted through a deliberative
18 planning process between the developer and the Department of Planning and Zoning, and
19 ultimately subject to final approval by the Planning Board.

20
21 **Section 128.0 – Supplementary Zoning District Regulations**

22 **P. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS IN ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR**

23 1. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY.

24 THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSECTION IS TO EXPAND THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS
25 TO ALL COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES FRONTING U.S. ROUTE 1, WITH A TOTAL LOT AREA OF
26 LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES. THE INTENT OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS IS TO
27 SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR REINVESTMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ALONG THE ROUTE 1
28 CORRIDOR BY ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN AND COORDINATED SITE
29 PLANNING. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS PROMOTE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT THAT

1 REFLECTS THE GOALS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR DESIGN
2 MANUAL AND ADVANCES HOWARD COUNTY'S ADOPTED REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC
3 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PROVIDES FOR
4 INDIVIDUALIZED AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS TO ENCOURAGE
5 CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT THAT RESPONDS TO SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT,
6 MINIMIZES ISOLATED OR DISCONNECTED BUILDINGS AND PAD SITES, AND ACHIEVES
7 COHESIVE, CONTEXT SENSITIVE DESIGN OUTCOMES THAT ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND
8 FUNCTIONALITY OF THE ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR.

9
10 2. CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.

11 THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS PRESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE
12 PERMITTED ONLY WHEN THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

- 13 A. BRINGS THE SITE INTO CONFORMANCE WITH THE ROUTE 1 MANUAL AND
14 CURRENT SITE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS;
15 B. CONSISTS OF A PARCEL OR ASSEMBLAGE OF PARCELS HAVING A TOTAL LOT AREA
16 OF LESS THAN TEN (10) ACRES;
17 C. FRONTS ON U.S. ROUTE 1; AND
18 D. SATISFIES THE PURPOSE SET FORTH IN SECTION 128.0.P.1.

19
20 3. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

21 PROJECTS THAT SATISFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 128.0.P.2 MAY
22 PROCEED UNDER THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PROCESS:

- 23 A. THE OWNER OF AN INTEREST IN A TRACT OF LAND MAY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION
24 FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT. PRIOR TO PREPARING A SPECIFIC PLAN AND
25 SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION, THE PETITIONER IS ENCOURAGED TO MEET WITH
26 THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING ON AN INFORMAL BASIS TO
27 DISCUSS THE OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.
28 B. PRIOR TO FILING A FORMAL APPLICATION FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT,
29 THE PETITIONER SHALL PRESENT THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN TO THE
30 DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL FOR EVALUATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
31 PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 16.1500 OF THE HOWARD COUNTY

1 CODE. THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS SHALL BE
2 INCLUDED IN THE TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
3 PLANNING AND ZONING AND FORWARDED TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR ITS
4 CONSIDERATION OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

5 C. THE FORMAL APPLICATION SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
6 PLANNING AND ZONING AND SHALL INCLUDE:

7 (1) AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES SHEETS
8 DEPICTING ALL EXISTING NATURAL AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENT FEATURES
9 OF THE LAND AREA TO BE INCLUDED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT,
10 AND ALSO DEPICTING AND/OR LISTING, AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE, THE
11 FOLLOWING FOR THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT:

- 12 (A) A BOUNDARY SURVEY;
- 13 (B) PERMITTED USES;
- 14 (C) ACCESSORY USES;
- 15 (D) BUILDINGS;
- 16 (E) STRUCTURES;
- 17 (F) PARKING AREAS AND NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES;
- 18 (G) POINTS AND WIDTHS OF VEHICULAR INGRESS AND EGRESS;
- 19 (H) ON-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES AND CONNECTIONS TO
20 OFF-SITE PEDESTRIAN-RELATED FEATURES;
- 21 (I) LANDSCAPING;
- 22 (J) HARDSCAPING;
- 23 (K) RETAINED NATURAL FEATURES SUCH AS WETLANDS, STEEP
24 SLOPES, AND TREE AND FOREST COVER;
- 25 (L) ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATIONS OF ALL SIDES OF ALL BUILDINGS
26 AND SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES WITH EXTERIOR MATERIALS
27 SPECIFIED;
- 28 (M) EXTERIOR LIGHTING PLAN WITH LIGHTING STRUCTURES AND
29 LIGHT SOURCES GIVEN ON SPECIFIC LIGHTING PRODUCT
30 INFORMATION SHEETS; AND/OR

1 (N) INFORMATION ON THE ADJOINING PROPERTIES, INCLUDING THE
2 OWNER'S NAME, ZONING, EXISTING USE, AND EXISTING SITE
3 IMPROVEMENTS.

4 (2) A WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT THAT EXPRESSES IN DETAIL:

5 (A) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CONFORMS TO
6 THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.P.1;

7 (B) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL ENHANCE
8 AND NOT OVERWHELM THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY;

9 (C) HOW THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL BE A
10 BENEFIT TO HOWARD COUNTY THAT IS GREATER THAN A
11 CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE PROPERTY USING THE
12 UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS; AND

13 (D) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO
14 MARKET STUDIES AND TRAFFIC STUDIES.

15 D. THE SUBMITTED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION WILL BE ASSIGNED AN
16 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT CASE NUMBER AND THE APPLICATION SHALL BE
17 SUBJECT TO THE STANDARD PRELIMINARY REVIEW PROCESS CONDUCTED FOR
18 ALL ZONING-RELATED CASES TO DETERMINE IF THE INFORMATION IN THE
19 APPLICATION MATERIALS IS SUFFICIENT TO ADEQUATELY EVALUATE THE
20 PROPOSAL. IF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING DETERMINES THAT
21 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND/OR CLARIFICATION IS NEEDED, IT SHALL SO
22 NOTIFY THE APPLICANT IN WRITING WITHIN 14 DAYS OF RECEIVING THE
23 APPLICATION. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT APPLICATION
24 INFORMATION IS DETERMINED TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE INITIAL FORMAL
25 EVALUATION, THE CASE SHALL BE CONSIDERED OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED FOR
26 SCHEDULING PURPOSES.

27 E. WITHIN 14 DAYS OF OFFICIALLY ACCEPTING THE CASE FOR SCHEDULING
28 PURPOSES, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL SCHEDULE A
29 REQUIRED FORMAL PROJECT MEETING WITH THE PETITIONER AND/OR THE
30 PETITIONER'S PROJECT TEAM IF:

1 (1) THE PETITIONER HAS NOT HELD INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH THE
2 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING TO DISCUSS THE OVERALL
3 CONCEPT FOR THE INTENDED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT PRIOR TO
4 SUBMITTING THE FORMAL APPLICATION, OR

5 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING HAS CONCERNS
6 REGARDING THE USE, DESIGN, AND OR SCOPE OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN
7 PROJECT THAT HAVE CHANGED FROM WHAT WAS DISCUSSED, INDICATED,
8 AND/OR SHOWN DURING THE INFORMAL MEETING(S).

9 F. ONCE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT IS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
10 PLANNING AND ZONING TO BE SUITABLY IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE PURPOSE
11 STATEMENT IN SECTION 128.0.P.1, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PETITIONER, THE
12 PETITIONER MAY SCHEDULE TO HAVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BE
13 REVIEWED BY THE SUBDIVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE (SRC) AT A REGULARLY
14 SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE SRC. THE PURPOSE OF THIS OPTIONAL SRC
15 REVIEW WOULD BE FOR THE PETITIONER TO HAVE ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANY
16 ISSUES IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT THAT WOULD NOT COMPLY WITH ALL
17 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF ANY OF THE REVIEWING AGENCIES.

18 G. AT THE POINT THAT THE PETITIONER DECIDES TO PROCEED WITH THE OPTIONAL
19 DESIGN PROJECT AND SO NOTIFIES THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
20 ZONING, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL SCHEDULE THE
21 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT FOR A PLANNING BOARD HEARING. THE
22 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING SHALL PREPARE A TECHNICAL STAFF
23 REPORT ON THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT, AND FORMALLY ISSUE THIS
24 TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED
25 PLANNING BOARD HEARING.

26 H. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL HOLD ITS PUBLIC HEARING ON THE OPTIONAL
27 DESIGN PROJECT AND MAY TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ANY COMMENTS
28 PRESENTED AT THAT PUBLIC HEARING. THE PLANNING BOARD MAY:

29 (1) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS PROPOSED, BASED UPON
30 FINDINGS THAT THE PROPOSED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WILL
31 ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 128.0.P.1;

1 (2) APPROVE THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT WITH REVISIONS OR
2 CONDITIONS, BASED UPON FINDINGS THAT THE REVISED OPTIONAL
3 DESIGN PROJECT WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSES OF SECTION
4 128.0.P.1; OR

5 (3) DENY THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

6 I. THE PLANNING BOARD SHALL ISSUE ITS FORMAL DECISION ON THE OPTIONAL
7 DESIGN PROJECT IN A DECISION AND ORDER. IF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT
8 IS APPROVED, ALL APPROVED EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT SHALL
9 BE STAMPED AS APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD AND SIGNED BY THE
10 PLANNING BOARD CHAIRPERSON.

11 J. NO SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHALL BE APPROVED FOR AN OPTIONAL DESIGN
12 PROJECT UNLESS THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONFORMS SUBSTANTIALLY TO
13 ALL EXHIBITS OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT AS APPROVED BY THE
14 PLANNING BOARD. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BELOW FOR PRE-AUTHORIZED MINOR
15 MODIFICATIONS, ANY MODIFICATIONS TO ANY PLANNING BOARD APPROVED
16 FEATURES OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT MUST BE APPROVED BY THE
17 PLANNING BOARD:

18 (1) MINOR ADDITIONS TO STRUCTURES, WITH A FLOOR AREA NO LARGER
19 THAN 10% OF THE EXISTING FLOOR AREA OF THE MAIN FLOOR, NOT TO
20 EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET.

21 (2) MINOR NEW ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IF THE LOCATION DOES NOT
22 INTERFERE WITH THE EXISTING APPROVED SITE LAYOUT (E.G.
23 CIRCULATION, PARKING, LOADING, STORM WATER MANAGEMENT
24 FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING OR BUFFERING).

25 (3) MINOR ADDITIONS TO PARKING LOTS COMPRISING NO MORE THAN 25%
26 OF THE ORIGINAL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES REQUIRED, NOT TO
27 EXCEED 25 SPACES.

28 (4) CLEARING OR GRADING THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 5,000 SQUARE FEET IN
29 AREA.

1 (5) SIMILAR MINOR MODIFICATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT
2 OF PLANNING AND ZONING, INCLUDING REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBER OF
3 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND THE INTENSITY OF THE UNIT MIX.
4

5 4. ADDITIONAL USES PERMITTED FOR OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS.

6 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY SET FORTH IN
7 SECTION 128.0.P.2 SHALL BE ELIGIBLE TO INCLUDE ANY USES SET FORTH IN THIS SECTION:

8 A. USES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT

9 (1) EXCEPT FOR THOSE EXCLUDED USES LISTED IN SECTION 128.0.P.4.B
10 BELOW, ALL OTHER USE CATEGORIES PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF RIGHT
11 IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS ARE PERMITTED AS A MATTER OF
12 RIGHT, PROVIDED THAT THE USE CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN
13 APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

14 (2) SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY PERMITTED AS A
15 MATTER OF RIGHT IN THE POR, B-1, AND B-2 DISTRICTS, BUT ARE
16 CONSIDERED TO BE EQUIVALENT TO AND/OR COMPATIBLE WITH THE
17 PERMITTED USE CATEGORIES, PROVIDED THAT THE SPECIAL USE
18 CATEGORIES ARE AUTHORIZED IN AN APPROVED OPTIONAL DESIGN
19 PROJECT AND PROVIDED THAT THE SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES ARE NOT
20 USES LISTED IN SECTION 128.0.P.4.B BELOW.

21 B. EXCLUDED USES

22 (1) ADULT LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS.

23 (2) BUS TERMINALS.

24 (3) DWELLINGS, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
25 128.0.P.4.C.

26 (4) FUNERAL HOMES AND MORTUARIES.

27 (5) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM EQUIPMENT
28 MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND PAINTING FACILITIES, INCLUDING FULL
29 BODY REPAIR AND INCIDENTAL SALE OF PARTS.

30 (6) MOTOR VEHICLE, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT AND FARM EQUIPMENT
31 SALES.

- 1 (7) MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION STATIONS.
- 2 (8) MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS OR TIRE STORE, INCLUDING INSTALLATION
- 3 FACILITIES.
- 4 (9) MOTOR VEHICLE TOWING AND STORAGE FACILITIES.
- 5 (10) NURSING HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES.
- 6 (11) PRIVATE PARKS, SWIMMING POOLS, PLAYGROUNDS, ATHLETIC FIELDS,
- 7 TENNIS COURTS, BASKETBALL COURTS, AND SIMILAR PRIVATE,
- 8 NONCOMMERCIAL RECREATION FACILITIES.
- 9 (12) RELIGIOUS FACILITIES, STRUCTURES AND LAND USED PRIMARILY FOR
- 10 RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.
- 11 (13) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE DRIVE-
- 12 THROUGH SERVICE, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
- 13 128.0.P.4.C.
- 14 (14) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND
- 15 UNIVERSITIES, EXCEPT AS MAY BE PERMITTED UNDER SECTION
- 16 128.0.P.4.C.
- 17 (15) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS.

18 C. INTEGRATED-DESIGN USES SUBJECT TO AUTHORIZATION

19 THE FOLLOWING USES MAY BE AUTHORIZED AS PERMITTED USES IN ANY

20 OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECTS THAT MEET THE AFOREMENTIONED CONDITIONS OF

21 ELIGIBILITY, PROVIDED THAT IT IS FOUND THAT THEY ARE CREATIVELY

22 INTEGRATED INTO THE PROJECT'S ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DESIGN AND ARE

23 SPECIFICALLY APPROVED IN THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT.

- 24 (1) MOTOR VEHICLE FUELING FACILITY.
- 25 (2) RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE USES WHICH INCLUDE DRIVE-
- 26 THROUGH SERVICE.
- 27 (3) SCHOOLS, PRIVATE ACADEMIC, INCLUDING COLLEGES AND
- 28 UNIVERSITIES.

29 D. ACCESSORY USES IN AN OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT

30 ONLY AS SPECIFICALLY ESTABLISHED WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE OPTIONAL

31 DESIGN PROJECT.

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5. OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BULK REGULATIONS

AS SPECIFICALLY ESTABLISHED WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE OPTIONAL DESIGN PROJECT,
WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF ANY STRUCTURE SHALL NOT EXCEED
65 FEET.

Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland that
this Act shall become effective 61 days after its enactment.

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, stands enacted on May 14, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been passed by the yeas and nays of two-thirds of the members of the Council notwithstanding the objections of the Executive, stands enacted on _____, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having received neither the approval nor the disapproval of the Executive within ten days of its presentation, stands enacted on _____, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, not having been considered on final reading within the time required by Charter, stands failed for want of consideration on _____, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been disapproved by the Executive and having failed on passage upon consideration by the Council stands failed on _____, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, the withdrawal of which received a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council, is withdrawn from further consideration on _____, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council