County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2026 Legislative Session Legislative day # 12

RESOLUTION NO. 171 – 2026

Introduced by: Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

Short title: Appointment – Rita Kristine Bernardo – Multimodal Transportation Board

Title: A RESOLUTION confirming the appointment of Rita Kristine Bernardo to the Multimodal Transportation Board.

Introduced and read first time on Oct 5, 2026.

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on Oct 14, 2026.

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted ✓, Adopted with amendments ___, Failed ___, Withdrawn ___ by the County Council on Oct 30, 2026.

Certified by Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

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

WHEREAS, Section 404 of the Howard County Charter and Section 6.300 of the Howard County Code provide for the County Executive to appoint and for the County Council to confirm nominees to Howard County Boards and Commissions created by law; and

WHEREAS, Sections 6.332 & 21.502 of the Howard County Code provide for a Multimodal Transportation Board in Howard County; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive has proposed the appointment of Rita Kristine Bernardo as a member of the Multimodal Transportation Board; and

WHEREAS, the County Council ratifies the County Executive's special trust and confidence in the abilities of the nominee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland this 30 day of October, 2026 that the following person is appointed as a member of the Multimodal Transportation Board to serve from the passage of this Resolution to October 30, 2029 or until a successor is appointed and confirmed:

Rita Kristine Bernardo
Columbia, Maryland

Rita Kristine G. Bernardo

Urban Planner | Transportation & Equity Planning

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Urban planner and Howard County resident with a Master in Urban Planning from Harvard GSD, focused on Complete Streets, pedestrian safety, active transportation, and multimodal transportation systems. Passionate about helping Howard County advance safe, accessible, and connected transportation networks that improve mobility and quality of life for residents of all ages and abilities.

Areas of Expertise: Complete Streets | Pedestrian Safety | Bicycle & Active Transportation | Multimodal Transportation Planning | Safe Routes to School | GIS Spatial & Corridor Analysis | Transit Planning | Vision Zero | Environmental Justice & Equity | Community Engagement | Policy Development

EDUCATION

Master in Urban Planning | Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD), Cambridge, MA — 05/2026
Concentration: Transportation & Infrastructure; APA Foundation Diversity Scholar

Bachelor of Science in Economics | St. Catherine University, St. Paul, MN — 05/2019
Minor in Statistics; Summa Cum Laude

Environmental Sustainability | CIEE Global Institute, Copenhagen & Berlin — 05/2019
Cycling Infrastructure and Shared Mobility Systems

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROJECTS

Pedestrian Safety & Corridor Planning | Harvard GSD Studio, Client: City of Revere, MA — 05/2025
- Conducted GIS corridor analysis to prioritize sidewalk gaps and unsafe school crossings in environmental justice communities, developing Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School recommendations that were incorporated into the City's planning efforts.

Pedestrian Accessibility & Wayfinding | Harvard GSD Studio, Client: City of Lynn, MA — 05/2023
- Identified first/last-mile transit access gaps and developed multilingual wayfinding strategies to improve connectivity and navigation for immigrant and refugee communities.

Climate-Resilient Multimodal Transit Planning | Harvard GSD Course: Transportation Economics — 12/2022
- Evaluated Bus Rapid Transit feasibility, operations, and implementation strategies to support long-term multimodal investment and reduce automobile dependence.

Public Realm & Community Development Strategy | Client: Capitol Riverfront BID — 09/2025
- Conducted stakeholder engagement and public space analysis to develop implementation recommendations for Tingey Square supporting multimodal activation, economic development, and placemaking.

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Faith Outreach Volunteer | Maryland United, Howard County, MD — 07/2025 – Present
- Provide free Scripture-based resources through community outreach in Howard County, engaging residents in public spaces and supporting community engagement and neighborhood well-being.

Co-Chair | GSD Mobility, Harvard GSD, Cambridge, MA — 09/2022 – 05/2023
- Co-founded Harvard GSD's first transportation student organization, building a cross-disciplinary community around transportation planning, mobility, and equitable infrastructure.

Mentor | Minnesota Center for Diversity in Economics, Remote — 03/2022 – Present
- Mentor high school and undergraduate women through the Cross-generational Femxle Economist Mentorship (C-FEM) Program, supporting educational, career, and financial development.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Urban Planning and Design | Harvard GSD, Cambridge, MA — 02/2025 – 08/2025
- Conducted GIS-based spatial analysis spanning 20+ data sources to map socioeconomic and climate vulnerability affecting island and military communities in Hawaii and Guam.
- Synthesized planning and climate adaptation research to support equitable planning and land stewardship strategies.

National Science Foundation INCLUDES Island Fellow | University of Guam, Guam — 02/2021 – 04/2022
- Built and maintained a GIS-based dashboard tracking all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, supporting government and community sustainability reporting.
- Coordinated reporting across 150+ government, nonprofit, and community partners to support long-range policy and sustainability initiatives.

Senior Program Associate | Net Impact, San Francisco Bay Area, CA — 09/2019 – 01/2021
- Managed a $575,000 national civic engagement program running for 500+ student leaders, owning day-to-day operations, communications, and stakeholder reporting.
- Led the successful transition of national programming to virtual delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining full program continuity.

Technical Skills: Esri ArcGIS Pro, R, Python, Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite, SketchUp, Canva

Languages: English (native); Tagalog (bilingual); Spanish, Korean, and CHamoru (working proficiency)