

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2021 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 5

RESOLUTION NO. 43 - 2021

Introduced by: Liz Walsh

A RESOLUTION encouraging the County Executive to implement a "Shared Streets Program" to promote the public health, safety, and welfare and the safe use of outdoor space during the State of Emergency due to COVID-19; and generally relating to implementing the "Shared Streets Program".

Introduced and read first time on March 1, 2021.

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

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on March 15, 2021.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Theodore Wimberly, 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This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted , Adopted with amendments , Failed , Withdrawn  by the County Council on April 5, 2021.

Certified by Michelle Harrod  
Theodore Wimberly, 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.

1           **WHEREAS**, In order to protect the public health, safety and welfare and to control and  
2 prevent the spread of COVID-19, Council Resolution No. 41-2020, adopted on March 20, 2020,  
3 extended the state of emergency declared by the County Executive through Executive Order 2020-  
4 02, issued on March 15, 2020, and stated that the state of emergency shall continue and remain in  
5 effect while the state of emergency and/or the catastrophic health emergency declared by Maryland  
6 Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. remains in effect or until terminated by Executive Order issued  
7 by the County Executive, whichever is later; and

8           **WHEREAS**, Pursuant to section 6.104(a) of the Howard County Code, the County  
9 Executive may exercise certain emergency functions during a declared state of emergency within  
10 the County, including the control of traffic; and

11  
12           **WHEREAS**, The need for social distancing and limiting in-door activities and gatherings  
13 will continue for the foreseeable future; and

14  
15           **WHEREAS**, The Horizon Foundation has demonstrated through its “Open Streets”  
16 initiative that reimagining the use of streets, most recently Tamar Drive and Columbia Road, for  
17 biking, walking, and gathering benefits people of all ages and abilities; and

18  
19           **WHEREAS**, The Horizon Foundation has found that Howard County: 1) lacks sidewalks  
20 on Dobbin Road, Little Patuxent Parkway, Route 1, and Route 40; 2) presents disability access  
21 concerns, particularly transitioning from streets to sidewalks, especially in old Ellicott City; and  
22 3) has far too many disconnected bike pathways; and

23  
24           **WHEREAS**, The benefits of walking have been well documented, including maintaining  
25 a healthy weight, improved mood, strengthening bones and muscles, improving balance and  
26 coordination, and preventing or managing various conditions, including heart disease, high blood  
27 pressure, and Type 2 diabetes; and

28

1           **WHEREAS**, Increasing numbers of residents are seeking to care for their mental and  
2 physical health during the COVID-19 pandemic by utilizing our local parks, sometimes resulting  
3 in overcrowding of these parks, and the parks reaching capacity; and  
4

5           **WHEREAS**, Businesses can benefit from the provision of expanded sidewalk space that  
6 enables patrons to more easily socially distance; and  
7

8           **WHEREAS**, Neighboring jurisdictions, including Montgomery County and Baltimore  
9 City, have implemented shared streets programs and are closing certain lanes to traffic, to make  
10 roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists during the pandemic, to allow pedestrians to maintain social  
11 distancing measures, to support local restaurants that are utilizing outdoor space for dining and  
12 curbside pickup, and to support retail businesses that are utilizing curbside pickup; and  
13

14           **WHEREAS**, According to the National Association of City Transportation Officials  
15 website, rethinking how street space is allocated or shared and which uses are prioritized can  
16 help to mitigate the health, economic, and social impacts of COVID-19; and  
17

18           **WHEREAS**, Park space pathways and walkable, bikeable space is not accessible to all in  
19 Howard County; and  
20

21           **WHEREAS**, Temporarily modifying current uses of County-controlled sidewalks, roads,  
22 and on-street parking to provide more space that allows safe, socially distanced outdoor activities  
23 and access to outdoor dining and restaurant and retail curbside pickup, will promote the health and  
24 well-being of Howard County residents, and support economic recovery during the current public  
25 health state of emergency.

26           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,  
27 Maryland this 5 day of April, 2021 that the County Council urges the County  
28 Executive to implement a “Shared Streets Program” that: 1) modifies current uses of County-  
29 controlled sidewalks, roads, and on-street parking; 2) permits certain lane closures to traffic; 3)

1 reduces speed limits and cut-through traffic on certain residential streets and encourages physically  
2 distanced walking, biking, and running in the roadway; 4) modifies certain streets to limit vehicular  
3 traffic and promote foot traffic; 5) allows for buildout of outdoor dining spaces in streets and  
4 sidewalks, known as “streeteries”; 6) limits parking in some areas to allow for expanded sidewalk  
5 space around businesses using existing roads, shoulders and sidewalks; 7) permits organizations,  
6 including homeowners associations, community associations, clubs, schools, parent-teacher  
7 organizations, and non-profits to request traffic restrictions; and 8) consults with neighborhood  
8 associations for recommendations for locations that could be utilized for implementing the “Shared  
9 Streets Program”.

**Office of the County Auditor**  
**Auditor's Analysis**

**Council Resolution No. 43-2021**

Introduced: March 1, 2021

Auditors: Maya Cameron and Ed Shulder

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Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact of this proposed legislation, as this is a request to the County Executive to implement a Shared Streets Program. The legislation does not require any changes and therefore does not impact County revenue or expense.

Purpose:

The purpose of this resolution is to encourage the County Executive, in coordination with the Office of Transportation, to take a number of actions to implement a Shared Streets Program.

The intent of the Shared Streets Program is to:

1. Promote the health and well-being of Howard County residents; and
2. Support economic recovery during the current public health state of emergency.

Other Comments:

If the County Executive chooses to implement a Shared Streets Program as envisioned by this resolution, County expenditures may increase for costs associated with lane closures (such as the cost of temporary barricades), street markings to identify use, and signage installation necessary to direct traffic for motor vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. The County may incur additional costs for traffic enforcement in the designated areas.

**Sayers, Margery**

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**From:** Jennifer White <jwhite@thehorizonfoundation.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 15, 2021 4:59 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Testimony Submission  
**Attachments:** Shared Streets Testimony\_031521.pdf

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good Afternoon,

Please find testimony on behalf of the Horizon Foundation in support of CR43-2021.

Thank you,

**Jennifer Arice White, MSPH**

Senior Policy and Community Engagement Officer, Horizon Foundation

Office: 443-766-1223 | Mobile: 248-345-3030

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**CR43-2021: Implementation of a "Shared Streets Program"**

**Position:** Support

Good Evening Chairperson Walsh and members of the Howard County Council

My name is Jennifer White, Sr. Policy and Community Engagement Officer at the Horizon Foundation in Howard County, MD. The Horizon Foundation is Howard County's community health foundation and the largest independent health philanthropy in the state of Maryland. We lead community change so everyone in Howard County can live a longer, better life.

The Horizon Foundation is in support of CR43-2021, which encourages the implementation of a "Shared Streets Program". Many of us are now relying on safe and accessible sidewalks, bike lanes, paths and crosswalks for physical activity, as a mental reprieve from isolation, and an important way for essential workers to get to their jobs. We salute Chairperson Walsh for her advocacy of Shared Streets as a temporary response to this global pandemic.

Implementing temporary, programmatic demonstrations of safer, more accessible streets is consistent with both WalkHoward and BikeHoward, our pedestrian and bike master plans respectively. The WalkHoward plan, for example, calls for a series of Howard County walk-about, which follows the example of the Columbia Association's Bikeabout. Led by the Department of Recreation and Parks and Columbia Association, local businesses would have an opportunity to engage with residents while raising awareness about the importance of creating safer, more accessible streets.

The types of Shared Streets program elements listed in CR43-2021 vary in cost and feasibility and would require appropriate funding and coordination with Howard County agencies if implemented. We urge Howard County Council to work with the County Executive to determine which Shared Streets elements are feasible and then agree on an appropriate level of funding to support these elements.

A Shared Streets Program is at best a temporary response to a much larger problem. We cannot stress enough the importance of creating permanent infrastructure that will enable our community to safely and accessibly bike, walk and access public transportation. The primary reason why this program is proposed is that our community does not have the safe, accessible roads we need.

Building safe, accessible streets requires long-term, consistent capital funding. Recall that just last year, the County Council voted to cut funding to several complete streets capital projects in the County Executive's budget. Moving forward, we urge you to make significant capital investments in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks, and intersections.

In closing, the Foundation supports demonstration programs like "Shared Streets", but long-term solutions like Complete Streets and investments in biking and walking capital projects will create the infrastructure that will make our roads much safer and more accessible for generations. We urge you to prioritize biking and walking projects in Howard County's capital budget now and in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL  
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION  
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Jennifer White, have been duly authorized by  
(name of individual)

Horizon Foundation to deliver testimony to the  
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding CR 43-2021 to express the organization's  
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.  
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Jennifer A. White

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 3/5/2021

Organization: Horizon Foundation

Organization Address: 10221 Winthrop Cir #200

Columbia, MD 21044

Number of Members: 10 Staff; 18 Board Members

Name of Chair/President: Nikki H. Vernick

This form can be submitted electronically via email to [councilmail@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councilmail@howardcountymd.gov) no later than 2 hours prior to the start of the Public Hearing.





**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL  
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION  
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION**

I, Carina Malchiodi, have been duly authorized by  
*(name of individual)*

Brownie Troop 1890 to deliver testimony to the  
*(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)*

County Council regarding CR43-2021 to express the organization's  
*(bill or resolution number)*

support for ~~opposition to / request to amend~~ this legislation.  
*(Please circle one.)*

Printed Name: Carina Malchiodi

Signature: Andrea Kodys (Mother, for Carina Malchiodi - minor child)

Date: 14 March 2021

Organization: Brownie Troop 1890

Organization Address: N/A

N/A

Number of Members: 15

Name of Chair/President: Andrea Kodys (Leader)

*This form can be submitted electronically via email to  
[councilmail@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councilmail@howardcountymd.gov) no later than 2 hours prior to the start of the  
Public Hearing.*