

Amendment 46 to Council Bill No. 28 -2023

**BY: The Chairperson at the Request
of the County Executive**

**Legislative Day 11
Date: October 2, 2023**

Amendment No. 46

(This Amendment adds a statement that the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations shall provide flexibility regarding opportunities to locate housing for the homeless or individuals with special needs in close proximity to jobs, amenities and transportation connections.)

- 1 In the *HoCo By Design* General Plan, attached to this Act as Exhibit A, amend the following
- 2 pages as indicated in this Amendment:
- 3 • Chapter 6, Dynamic Neighborhoods – page 68
- 4 • Chapter 11, Implementation – page 45
- 5
- 6 Correct all page numbers, numbering, and formatting within this Act to accommodate this
- 7 amendment.

HOMELESSNESS

The Path Home is Howard County's strategic plan to end homelessness, and its implementation requires support from various county agencies and nonprofit organizations. Ending homelessness requires a community-wide commitment to provide housing, transportation, employment, and other wrap around services. This section of HoCo By Design focuses primarily on the housing needs of this population and supplements the policies and actions identified in the "Opportunities to Increase the Supply of Income-Restricted Housing Units" section. The policies and actions in both of these sections are intended to help the County achieve the housing goals identified in The Path Home.

Despite the County's resources and services committed to resolving homelessness, a significant number of residents struggle to maintain housing and are at risk of or are experiencing homelessness. The Point in Time (PIT) count is a nationwide effort to capture the number and characteristics of persons experiencing homelessness in America. According to the County's 2019 PIT count, a total of 201 people identified as being homeless in January 2019. Of these 201 individuals, 129 were sheltered and 72 were unsheltered. Homelessness in Howard County disproportionately affects the African American population, which represents 20% of the general population but makes up 58% of the homeless population.

According to The Path Home:

- Emergency shelter space is often full; clients may wait as long as a year for a shelter bed.
- The system has limited rapid re-housing resources, a practice that has worked well in communities that have shown a significant reduction in homelessness.

The Path Home advocates for a housing first approach to homelessness intervention. One of the key challenges to addressing homelessness is the lack of affordable housing stock that can accommodate the needs of this population. In terms of housing stock, one size does not fit all. Homes serving this population need to vary in size to accommodate both small and large families, incorporate universal design elements for those with physical disabilities, and be close to amenities, jobs, and transportation connections. By increasing the number of affordable homes that can accommodate these various needs, those who are homeless would spend less time in temporary shelters and could be re-housed more quickly.



DN-15 Policy Statement



Increase access to and availability of affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness in Howard County.

Implementing Actions

1. Seek out additional opportunities for partnerships on future housing developments to increase the number of homeless preference set-aside units developed in Howard County.
2. Create awareness and advocacy around the needs of those experiencing homelessness whenever new housing developments are being planned and created.
3. Evaluate the need for additional shelter/bed capacity, permanent supportive housing, and expanded public-private partnerships to address the needs of the County's chronically homeless and other individuals with special needs.
4. Explore opportunities for acquisition of blighted or under-utilized properties for the purposes of providing flexible shelter options and services for the homeless population.
5. Seek opportunities to locate housing for the homeless or individuals with special needs in close proximity to jobs, amenities, and transportation connections and ensure that the Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations provide flexibility for these opportunities.

Table 10-1: Implementation Matrix		
Policy and Implementing Actions	Lead Agency	Timeframe (Mid-Term five-year, Long-Term six+ years, Ongoing)
DN-15 - Increase access to and availability of affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness in Howard County.		
1. Seek out additional opportunities for partnerships on future housing developments to increase the number of homeless preference set-aside units developed in Howard County.	DCRS DHCD	Ongoing
2. Create awareness and advocacy around the needs of those experiencing homelessness whenever new housing developments are being planned and created.	DCRS DHCD	Ongoing
3. Evaluate the need for additional shelter/bed capacity, permanent supportive housing, and expanded public-private partnerships to address the needs of the County's chronically homeless and other individuals with special needs.	DCRS DHCD Private Partners	Mid-Term
4. Explore opportunities for acquisition of blighted or under-utilized properties for the purposes of providing flexible shelter options and services for the homeless population.	DCRS DHCD	Ongoing
5. Seek opportunities to locate housing for the homeless or individuals with special needs in close proximity to jobs, amenities, and transportation connections <u>and ensure that the Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations provide flexibility for these opportunities.</u>	DCRS DHCD DPZ	Ongoing

Table 10-1: Implementation Matrix		
Policy and Implementing Actions	Lead Agency	Timeframe (Mid-Term five-year, Long-Term six+ years, Ongoing)
QBD-1 - Prioritize character and design in future development, recognizing variations in Howard County's unique areas.		
1. 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.	DPZ	Mid-term
2. Build on the 2018 Development Regulations Assessment to update the County's Zoning Regulations and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and policies. Incorporate opportunities to codify current practices and create regulations and design standards for new developments, infill developments, and redevelopments.	DPZ	Mid-Term
3. Evaluate the existing historic district zones and consider replacing them with new historic zoning district overlays or form-based districts.	DPZ	Mid-Term
4. Review the Design Advisory Panel (DAP) review areas and approved guidelines for updates. Consider whether the role of the DAP should be expanded to other areas within Howard County.	DPZ	Long-term
5. Revise the New Town Zoning District and investigate the use of enhanced design guidelines and character-based or form-based codes in Columbia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Build upon the preferred development types, patterns, intensities, and design elements described in HoCo By Design's Character Areas technical appendix. b. Take into consideration the design and planning principles illustrated in HoCo By Design's Focus Areas technical appendix. c. Explore rules and requirements for design review by the Design Advisory Panel, or a combination of staff and the DAP. d. Identify the appropriate purpose and timing of design review within the development review process. 	DPZ	Mid-Term