

**Amendment 1 to Amendment 95
to Council Bill No. 28-2023**

BY: Deb Jung

**Legislative Day 12
Date: 10/11/2023**

(This amendment restores the quotes to Chapter 9 in Amendment 95.)

1 Substitute page 1 of Amendment 95 with the attached pages 1 and 2 to this Amendment to
2 Amendment.

3

4

5 Substitute the attached page INF-8, 13, 20, 25 of Amendment 95 with the attachment INF-8, 13,
6 20, 25 to this Amendment to Amendment.

7

8

9

Amendment 95 to Council Bill No. 28 -2023

BY: Deb Jung

Legislative Day 11

Date: October 2, 2023

Amendment No. 95

(This Amendment makes the following changes to HoCo by Design Chapter 9 and Chapter 11):

*Chapter 9:
Supporting
Infrastructure*

- *Adds a requirement to the INF-2 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions to develop a scoring system for prioritizing the location of capital investments;*
- *Adds a requirement to the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions to explore creating a third police district and police headquarters;*
- *Amends the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions about adequate police staffing to include population and response times as considerations;*
- *Adds a requirement to the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions to expand community policing on greenways, outreach programs, and the recruitment of officers;*
- *Deletes the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions about "Smart City" technologies;*
- *Adds requirement to replace fire and rescue vehicles with electric vehicles when possible in INF-4 Policy Statement Implementation Action 3;*
- *Rewords Implementation Action 5 in INF-4 Policy Statement; and*
- *Clarifies that communities in underserved areas should be considered in establishing LPPRP goals and priorities in INF-5 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions; ~~and~~*
- *~~Removes quotes displayed as graphics.~~*

*Chapter 11:
Implementation*

- *Adds a requirement to the INF-2 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions to develop a system for prioritizing the location of capital investments;*
- *Adds a requirement to the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions to explore creating a third police district and police headquarters;*
- *Amends the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions about adequate police staffing to include population and response times as considerations;*
- *Adds a requirement to the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions to expand community policing on greenways, outreach programs, and the recruitment of officers;*

- *Deletes the INF-3 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions about "Smart City" technologies;*
- *Adds requirement to replace fire and rescue vehicles with electric vehicles when possible in INF-4 Policy Statement Implementation Action 3;*
- *Rewords Implementation Action 5 in INF-4 Policy Statement; and*
- *Clarifies that communities in underserved areas should be considered in establishing LPPRP goals and priorities in INF-5 Policy Statement's Implementing Actions.)*

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 9: Supporting Infrastructure: 8, 11, 13, 17, 20, 24, 25, and 28.

4 • Chapter 11: Implementation: 54, and 55.

5

6 Correct all page numbers, numbering, and formatting within this Act to accommodate this
7 amendment.

8

Sustainable and Equitable Infrastructure Investments

Infrastructure investments require careful long-term fiscal planning and prioritization. Some communities struggle with strategic planning or accounting for the full cost of infrastructure projects, which may include not only the cost of construction or acquisition of the facility or equipment, but also annual operating and maintenance costs. There may also be necessary expenses in the future to eventually rehabilitate or replace the asset once it has reached the end of its useful life. It is important to account for full long-term costs to avoid large unanticipated expenses.

Spending Affordability Advisory Committee (Saac)

The Spending Affordability Advisory Committee (SAAC) is tasked with making recommendations to the County Executive on revenue projections, General Obligation bond authorizations, long-term fiscal outlook, and county revenue and spending patterns. SAAC is directed to prepare and present a report to the County Executive, on or before March 1 annually, including:

- Projected General Fund revenues for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Recommended new county debt (General Obligation bonds) authorization.
- An analysis of the long-term fiscal outlook including multi-year projections.
- Other findings and/or recommendations that the Committee deems appropriate.

In March 2021, the Howard County Spending Affordability Advisory Committee (SAAC) released their report for Fiscal Year 2022, which identified the need to strengthen long-term strategic planning and fiscal discipline to ensure infrastructure investments are sustainable, with adequate prioritization and full cost accounting.

The SAAC noted that spending requests from all agencies significantly outpaced resources available and that the funding gap was projected to grow in coming years, as slower economic growth has been forecasted compared to prior decades. The magnitude of the funding gap was alarming: requested funds for capital projects by all agencies in Fiscal Years 2022-2027 were approximately double the projected debt capacity and other dedicated resources for the same fiscal years.

— “ —
Howard County will soon transition from a growing county with significant building and associated cost and revenue to a mature county with more stable population growth. Affordability will be even more challenging as little new housing is able to be built and the County will have to rely on different sources of revenue while attending to aging infrastructure. I am hopeful this process addresses this transition and provides for the discovery of solutions.

— “ —
- HoCo By Design process participant

Howard County will soon transition from a growing county with significant building and associated cost and revenue to a mature county with more stable population growth. Affordability will be even more challenging as little new housing is able to be built and the County will have to rely on different sources of revenue while attending to aging infrastructure. I am hopeful this process addresses this transition and provides for the discovery of solutions.

- HoCo By Design process participant





— “ —

Police, Fire, and Rescue should be top priority. They keep us and our roadways safe.

— “ —

- HoCo By Design process participant

Police, Fire, and Rescue should be top priority. They keep us and our roadways safe.

- HoCo By Design process participant

Police Protection

In 2022, police protection in Howard County was provided by the 509 sworn officers serving in the Howard County Police Department (HCPD) and was supported by 229 full-time and contingency civilian staff members. The department included 67 bike officers and eight K-9 teams. Given Howard County’s population at that time of 334,529, HCPD had one police officer per 657 residents.

The HCPD is separated into two patrol districts, each of which has its own police station. The Southern District Police Station is located in Laurel and covers the Columbia area and the southeastern part of the County. The Northern District Police Department is located in Ellicott City, adjacent to the George Howard Building, and covers Ellicott City, Elkridge, and the Rural West. HCPD moved its administrative components—including the Police Chief, Command Staff, and Human Resources—out of the Ellicott City station to Elkridge in August 2020 because of inadequate space and the need to consolidate the Criminal Investigations Bureau at that location. HCPD also has a Community Outreach Center in Columbia, a small space at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center in the Rural West, and a 20-year-old training center in Marriottsville.

The type, amount, and location of future development in Howard County all impact HCPD’s needed resources and its ability to adequately respond to service calls from the County’s residents and businesses. Police department members are less dependent on a network of stations than their fire department colleagues because they typically rely on mobile patrol vehicles, rather than stationary fire engines and ambulances. Therefore, the most important investments for sustaining and expanding police protection in the County are new police officers, patrol vehicles, and specialty equipment.

As the population grows, so does the volume of calls that HCPD needs to respond to, and the number of calls from a community can vary by its type and location. For instance, senior housing and lower-density neighborhoods (especially those found in the Rural West) generally generate fewer service calls, while commercial centers, such as malls, and higher-density neighborhoods typically generate more calls. Furthermore, a community’s activity levels may influence the number and type of police officers needed to adequately cover a beat patrol and meet the local community’s needs.

A key performance metric for HCPD is response time, which is directly influenced by a patrol beat’s activity levels and the availability of officers to respond quickly. HCPD strives to maintain and improve its average response time, which was eight minutes and 14 seconds for Priority 1 calls in 2022.

Many of the patrol beats in eastern portions of the County—inside both the Northern and Southern Patrol Districts—such as Route 1, are overburdened compared to other areas. The County should consider early ideas about the need for, and benefits of, a third HCPD patrol district and police station.

fire and reScue Services

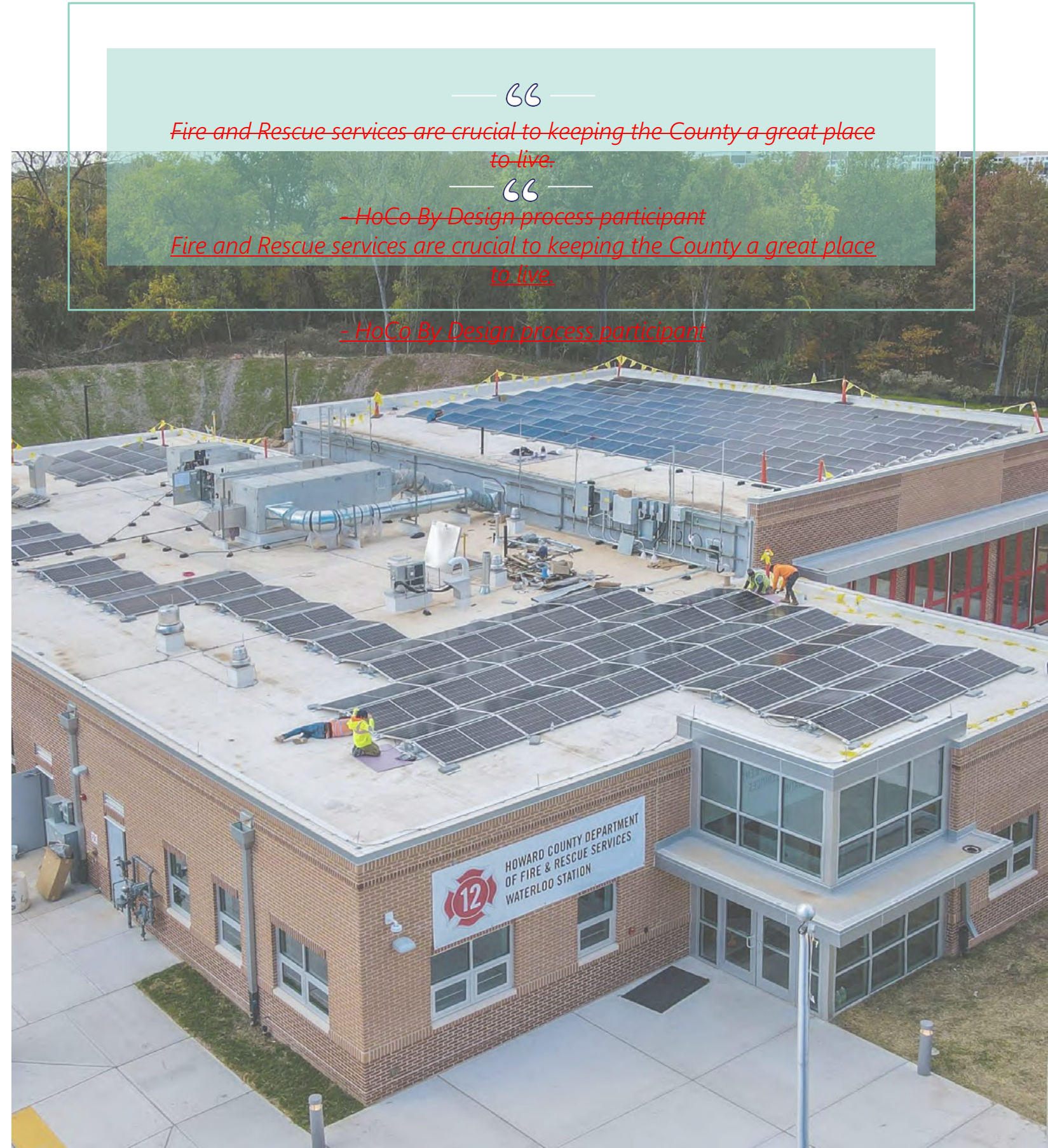
Fire protection and emergency medical services are provided to County residents and businesses by the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (HCDFRS). In the fall 2022, HCDFRS consisted of 14 fire stations located throughout the County with a 15th in the design phase of construction. The stations were staffed by 557 full-time career firefighters, 254 operational volunteer firefighters, and 79 civilian and contingent personnel. HCDFRS' 2021-2024 Strategic Plan further describes the department and its vision, goals, and objectives for the next several years.

In 2019, the County opened Station 14 near Merriweather Post Pavilion to serve new and ongoing growth in Downtown Columbia. Station 12 was opened in October 2022 in Waterloo to serve continued growth and increasing call volume. Meanwhile, a new Station 15 was in design in North Columbia to serve increasing demands for service. In 2013, HCDFRS responded to 29,634 incidents. In 2019, HCDFRS responded to 38,110 incidents—an average 4.1% increase in incident volume per year. In 2020, incidents dropped nearly 11% to 34,000, a circumstance likely influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic and individuals' choices to use alternative treatment options in lieu of hospital emergency room visits. In 2021, call volume trended upwards to 36,034 with the expectation to return to pre-pandemic numbers, as 2022 was projected to have over 37,000 incidents. Of those incidents, nearly 60% were located in the first due response areas of four stations: Station 9 (Long Reach), Station 2 (Ellicott City), Station 6 (Savage/Laurel), and Station 7 (Banneker). Medical and rescue incidents accounted for 82% of the call volume.

HCDFRS continues to add and train staff on front-line fire apparatus to comply with National Fire Protection Association standards. The department was selected for the American Heart Association's Mission Lifeline Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Gold Plus Award in 2020. The award recognizes departments that implement quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients experiencing cardiac emergencies. HCDFRS also received two National Association of Counties awards, one in 2021 for the Mobile Integrated Community Health initiative and one in 2022 for the Carcinogen Reduction Plan.

Additional employment and residential growth, and changing demographics countywide, are expected to create the need for additional fire station(s) by 2030, equipment, and personnel to maintain and improve fire and emergency medical response times. The County levies a fire tax countywide that serves as the primary funding source for the County's fire and rescue tax fund (a dedicated fund solely used for fire and rescue services). An EMS Transport Fee passed in FY 2020 also provides revenue for this dedicated funding source. As of fall 2022, the fire tax rate was 23.60 cents per \$100 of assessed value. The rate was increased in 2019 to help support anticipated staffing and operating needs to close service gaps and cope with future population growth. In addition, the County implements a transfer tax of which a rate of 0.1875% of property transaction value is designated to funding HCDFRS capital projects.

Unlike police departments, fire departments are more dependent on a network of fire stations, fire hydrants, and other water supplies located near neighborhoods, businesses, and industrial centers to house the needed fire engines, ladder trucks, ambulances, and other support vehicles.



— “ —
Fire and Rescue services are crucial to keeping the County a great place to live.

— “ —
—HoCo By Design process participant
Fire and Rescue services are crucial to keeping the County a great place to live.

—HoCo By Design process participant



— “ —
Providing parks, recreation, and public spaces is essential to the human spirit.
— “ —
—HoCo By Design process participant
Providing parks, recreation, and public spaces is essential to the human spirit.

- HoCo By Design process participant

Recreation and Parks

Parks, open space, and recreation facilities and programs contribute significantly to a healthy lifestyle and a high quality of life for Howard County’s residents and visitors. Every five years, the County updates its Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP), a comprehensive plan that guides the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) on key issues, trends, and plans for managing and enhancing its preserved public lands, facilities, and programs. The 2022 LPPRP is organized around five aspirations that incorporate department goals and strategies:

- Deliver accessible experiences to all members of the community.
- Be a trusted steward for natural resources.
- Acknowledge and amplify all cultural histories.
- Maintain functional and financial responsibility.
- Maintain high-quality spaces.

The first three aspirations also respond to the three themes of the LPPRP—parks and recreation, natural resource conservation, and agricultural land preservation. Environmental stewardship and equitable access to Howard County’s parks, open space, and recreation facilities and programs are central tenants for the County and will continue to be essential when planning for Howard County’s future. DRP oversees and maintains 9,825 acres of land, including 5,779 acres used for the County’s 98 regional, community, and neighborhood parks, and 4,046 acres used as open space. In addition, the County benefits from 9,268 acres of state parkland, 3,213 acres of Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) land for public use, and 3,629 acres of Columbia Association open space. The presence of state parks, such as the Patapsco Valley State Park; Columbia’s lakes, open space, and trail system; and county facilities, such as the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area and the Robinson Nature Center, all greatly contribute to Howard County’s access to and appreciation for nature.

The County’s park system includes 44 playgrounds, three community gardens, multiple recreation centers, and a wide array of athletic fields and facilities, including basketball courts, skate parks, baseball and softball diamonds, tennis and pickleball courts, and multi-purpose fields. The County also offers nearly 112 miles of trails for residents and visitors to enjoy.

DRP offers programming and activities for residents of all ages. In 2019, the Department served over 100,000 people in approximately 8,500 different programs, a figure that underscores the widespread use and enjoyment of the County’s parks and recreational activities. Many DRP programs take place at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex or one of the County’s three community centers located in Cooksville, Laurel, and Ellicott City.

There are also other public, nonprofit, and private organizations that provide a variety of recreation programs, events, and leisure services in Howard County. The LPPRP includes updated information on these organizations to ensure that DRP is aware of the opportunities that exist to fill gaps, seek out partners when appropriate, and reduce or eliminate the potential duplication of efforts.