

Amendment 5 to Council Bill No. 66-2025

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

**Legislative Day 14
Date: October 6, 2025**

Amendment No. 5

(This Amendment adds language that supporting industrial uses in zoning will be important.)

- 1 In the Gateway Master Plan, attached to this Act, on page 94, amend the Zoning Approach
- 2 language as shown in the attached revised page 94.
- 3
- 4 Correct all page numbers, numbering, and formatting within this Act to accommodate this
- 5 amendment.

1 *Zoning Approach*

2 The long-term transformation of Gateway from a traditional business park – with a
3 strong focus on industrial, manufacturing, and office uses – into an innovation
4 district will require flexibility in terms of zoning regulations. The vision for Gateway is
5 to continue to support economic development and business growth in Howard
6 County, while integrating new employment and housing opportunities along with
7 public amenities, multi-modal connections, transit options, and open spaces to
8 foster the development of a thriving community of innovation.

9 The existing underlying zoning districts in Gateway contain height limitations that
10 are restrictive, setbacks that do not allow for closely spaced taller buildings and
11 prohibit residential uses. As Howard County does not currently have any zoning
12 districts in its code that could realize the master plan’s vision, and given the number
13 of public amenities, open spaces, affordable housing goals and mix of uses the
14 master plan would like to achieve, a new zoning district will need to be created.
15 While the master plan provides recommendations on potential land uses, the master
16 plan by itself does not change zoning or the permitted uses within Gateway.
17 Following the adoption of the Master Plan, a detailed zoning program/code effort will
18 be undertaken to establish the specific zoning regulations including a list of
19 permitted uses for each mixed-use focus area.

20 Zoning will guide industrial uses to be supportive of a mixed-use environment and
21 compatible with future neighboring residential uses. Establishing permitted
22 supporting industrial uses and their requirements, such as appropriate setback,
23 screening, and buffer requirements will be an important part of developing
24 Gateway’s zoning program and therefore, may require an evaluation of the base
25 zoning district in certain areas – such as residential-focused and dual-focused
26 subareas. This evaluation should be conducted in collaboration with property owners
27 and innovation district stakeholders to ensure permitted uses will support the
28 innovation industry cluster. In general, industrial uses will be encouraged to be
29 “clean” with minimal environmental impacts in terms of pollution and odors and will
30 be further defined in the future zoning update.

31 For Gateway, the preliminary recommendation is to consider alternative zoning
32 approaches such as performance-based zoning, incentive-based zoning, overlay
33 districts, or form-based codes. These zoning tools could be applied individually or in
34 combination to provide effective guidance on creating a great place. For example, a
35 combined approach could result in an overlay district that contains performance
36 standards, incentives, and/or form-based elements. And, as an alternative to a form-
37 based code, design guidelines could be developed as part of the alternative zoning
38 approach. While the master plan does not recommend a preferred zoning approach,
39 stakeholders indicated a preference for an overlay district that would allow