

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2025 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 15

Resolution No. 223 -2025

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

Short Title: Central Library, Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement

Title: A RESOLUTION declaring the intent for the County to take ownership of a portion of the Lake Kittamaqundi waterfront by entering into a purchase and sale agreement for the acquisition of the Lakefront Library property; authorizing the County Executive to negotiate a land swap agreement for certain parcels in Downtown Columbia pursuant to 4.4.C of the Downtown Columbia Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement; and to prepare certain financing plans.

Introduced and read first time _____, 2025.

By order _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Read for a second time at a public hearing on _____, 2025.

By order _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted____, Adopted with amendments____, Failed____, Withdrawn____, by the County Council on _____, 2025.

Certified By _____
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

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

1 **WHEREAS**, the Kittamaqundi Lakefront is and has historically been a primary gathering
2 place for the Howard County community, whether for the 4th of July, Lakefest, and many other
3 community events since the founding of Columbia nearly 60 years ago; and
4

5 **WHEREAS**, the Lakefront is one of the principal civic engagement spaces in Howard
6 County and should be owned by Howard County, open and accessible to all; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the Lakefront is deeply connected to the natural environment, making it an
9 ideal location for substantial civic and community investment consistent with the original vision
10 for Columbia; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, the Downtown Columbia Plan calls for a New Central Library to be built
13 downtown and the Plan establishes that “this new library complex could move the Howard
14 County Library in the direction of an “Experience Library,” an intellectual, interactive learning
15 center combining visual exhibitions with interesting architecture and typical library elements.”;
16 and
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the need for a new Howard County Central Library (New Central Library)
19 has long been established, including: by the Howard County Library System (HCLS) in its
20 Master Plan released on October 10, 2019 and the Vision: A New HCLS Central Branch released
21 on November 13, 2008; by Howard County, Maryland (the County) through the Downtown
22 Columbia Plan adopted on February 1, 2010 and amended on November 9, 2016; and by the
23 County and Howard Research And Development Corporation (HRD) through the Development
24 Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) adopted on November 9, 2016; and
25

26 **WHEREAS**, according to the 2024 Howard County Rental Survey commissioned by the
27 Howard County Housing Commission and the Howard County Department of Housing and
28 Community Development, there is a shortage of at least 6,100 affordable housing units in
29 Howard County for households with incomes below \$60,000 per year; and
30

1 **WHEREAS**, locating the New Central Library on the Kittamaqundi Lakefront creates
2 more capacity for mixed income housing at the Merriweather site designated for the library in
3 conjunction with affordable housing in the DRRA and accelerates the redevelopment of the
4 existing library site for much-needed mixed-income housing; and
5

6 **WHEREAS**, this creates more affordable housing opportunities in an area with strong
7 access to employment, transit, community amenities, and cultural and educational resources; and
8

9 **WHEREAS**, HRD intends to sell a portion of the property located at 10227 Wincopin
10 Circle, Columbia, Maryland 211044 (the “Lakefront Library Property”) in fee simple to Howard
11 County for purposes of the County constructing a New Central Library consistent with the
12 conceptual design presented in March of 2023; and
13

14 **WHEREAS**, Pursuant to Section 4.4.C. of the DRRA, HRD is also prepared to enter into
15 a purchase and sale agreement to convey the C-1 parcel in the Merriweather District, for mixed-
16 income housing as referenced in the DRRA, at no cost to County, which will then convey the
17 parcel to the Howard County Housing Commission (the Commission), simultaneously with the
18 entry into a purchase and sale agreement to convey the Lakefront Library Property to the
19 County; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, upon completion of the construction of the New Central Library, the
22 County will convey the Existing Central Library Site to HRD, and HRD will subsequently
23 convey the Existing Central Library Site to the Commission pursuant to the DRRA.
24

25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,
26 Maryland this ____ day of _____ 2025 that:

- 27 (1) the County Council endorses action by the County Executive to enter into a purchase
28 and sale agreement with HRD for the acquisition of the Lakefront Library Property in
29 fee simple, subject to appropriation, following an updated appraisal and negotiation
30 for the purchase of the parcel;

- 1 (2) such purchase and sale agreement will include a term that should the County fail to
2 commence and thereafter diligently pursue vertical construction on the library within
3 4 years from the date of closing, HRD may request to purchase back the Lakefront
4 Library Property, subject to County Council approval consistent with Section 4.201
5 of the Howard County Code;
- 6 (3) the County Council endorses action by the County Executive to draft a land swap
7 agreement pursuant to Section 4.4.C of the DRRA whereby HRD will convey Parcel
8 C-1 to the County, and the County will convey the Existing Central Library Site to
9 HRD subject to Section 4.201 of the County Code, both of which sites are to
10 ultimately be conveyed to the Commission for mixed income housing as required by
11 the DRRA; and
- 12 (4) the County Council endorses action by the County Executive to prepare a financing
13 plan for the full project to be presented to Council for approval as part of the FY2027
14 capital budget.