

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 Kittamaquindi 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~~ agreements for the conveyance of certain parcels in Downtown Columbia ~~pursuant to 4.4.C of~~ to satisfy the requirements of the Downtown Columbia Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement; and to prepare certain financing plans.

Introduced and read first time Nov 3, 2025.

By order

Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Read for a second time at a public hearing on Nov 19, 2025.

By order

Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted ☒, Adopted with amendments ☒, Failed ☐, Withdrawn ☐, by the County Council on Dec 1, 2025.

Certified By

Michelle Harrod
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 DRRRA 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 DRRRA, 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 DRRRA, 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**, Section 4.4.C. of the DRRRA provides that HRD shall convey the C-1 parcel
22 in the Merriweather District for the Howard County Housing Commission (the “Commission”)
23 to construct mixed-income housing; and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, the County and HRD, after consultation with the Commission, agreed that
26 in order to expedite mixed income housing in the Merriweather District, by no later than the date
27 of the County’s entry into a purchase and sale agreement with HRD for the purchase of the
28 Lakefront Library Property, HRD will enter into an agreement with the County, which will
29 memorialize that HRD will convey, at no cost, the C-1 parcel to the Commission directly by a
30 date that is no later than the County’s acquisition of the Lakefront Library Property, all of which
31 is consistent with the DRRRA; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, upon completion of the construction of the New Central Library, the
3 County will convey the Existing Central Library Site to HRD, and HRD will subsequently
4 ~~convey the Existing Central Library Site~~ directly to the Commission ~~pursuant to~~ consistent with
5 the DRRA.

6
7 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,
8 Maryland this 1 day of December 2025 that:

- 9 (1) the County Council endorses action by the County Executive to enter into a purchase
10 and sale agreement with HRD for the acquisition of the Lakefront Library Property in
11 fee simple, subject to appropriation, following an updated appraisal and negotiation
12 for the purchase of the parcel;
- 13 (2) such purchase and sale agreement will include a term that should the County fail to
14 commence and thereafter diligently pursue vertical construction on the library within
15 4 years from the date of closing, HRD may request to purchase back the Lakefront
16 Library Property, subject to County Council approval consistent with Section 4.201
17 of the Howard County Code;
- 18 (3) the County Council endorses action by the County Executive to ~~draft a land swap~~
19 negotiate agreement pursuant to agreements consistent with Section 4.4.C of the
20 DRRA whereby HRD will convey Parcel C-1 to the ~~County Commission~~, at no cost,
21 and the County will convey the Existing Central Library Site to HRD ~~the~~
22 Commission subject to Section 4.201 of the County Code, both of which sites ~~are to~~
23 ultimately be conveyed to the Commission will be used for mixed income housing as
24 required by the DRRA; ~~and~~
- 25 (4) the County Council agrees that such action is consistent with the intent of the DRRA
26 and expedites the process for providing the much-needed mixed income housing
27 required by the DRRA; and
- 28 (45) the County Council endorses action by the County Executive to prepare a financing
29 plan for the full project to be presented to Council for approval as part of the FY2027
30 capital budget.

Amendment No. 1 to Amendment No. 1 to Council Resolution No. 223-2025

BY: Liz Walsh

**Legislative Day No. 17
Date: December 1, 2025**

Amendment No. 1 to Amendment No. 1

*(This amendment adds language clarifying that the C-1 Merriweather parcel shall be conveyed
at no cost to the Howard County Housing Commission.)*

1 On page 1, in line 15, after “convey”, add “at no cost”.

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3 On page 2, in line 5, after “Commission”, add “at no cost”.

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I certify that this a true copy of

Am 1 to Am 1 to CR 223-2025
passed on December 1, 2025

Michelle Howard
Council Administrator

Amendment No. 1 to Council Resolution No. 223-2025

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

**Legislative Day No. 17
Date: December 1, 2025**

Amendment No. 1

(This amendment alters the narrative around the conveyance of the C-1 parcel to the Housing Commission in order to expedite the process of providing mixed income housing.)

In the title:

1. In the fourth line, after “negotiate”, strike “a land swap agreement for” and substitute “agreements for the conveyance of” and strike “pursuant to”; and
2. In the fifth line strike “4.4.C of” and substitute “to satisfy the requirements of”.

On page 2, strike lines 14 through 19, inclusive and in their entirety and substitute:

“WHEREAS, Section 4.4.C. of the DRRA provides that HRD shall convey the C-1 parcel in the Merriweather District for the Howard County Housing Commission (the “Commission”) to construct mixed-income housing; and

WHEREAS, the County and HRD, after consultation with the Commission, agreed that in order to expedite mixed income housing in the Merriweather District, by no later than the date of the County’s entry into a purchase and sale agreement with HRD for the purchase of the Lakefront Library Property, HRD will enter into an agreement with the County, which will memorialize that HRD will convey, at no cost, the C-1 parcel to the Commission directly by a date that is no later than the County’s acquisition of the Lakefront Library Property, all of which is consistent with the DRRA; and”.

On page 2, in line 22, strike “to HRD, and HRD will subsequently”.

On page 2, in line 23, strike “convey the Existing Central Library Site” and substitute “directly” and, in the same line, strike “pursuant to” and substitute “consistent with”.

I certify that this is a true copy of
Am 1 to CR 223-2025
passed on December 1, 2025
Nicholas Herrell
Council Administrator

1 On page 3, in line 6, strike “draft a land swap” and substitute “negotiate”.

2
3 On page 3, in line 7, strike “agreement pursuant to” and substitute “agreements consistent with”.

4
5 On page 3, in line 8, strike the first “County” and substitute “Commission, at no cost”.

6
7 On page 3, in line 9, strike “HRD” and substitute “the Commission” and strike “are to”.

8
9 On page 3, in line 10, strike “ultimately be conveyed to the Commission” and substitute “will be
10 used”.

11
12 On page 3, in line 11, strike “and”.

13
14 On page 3, after line 11, insert:

15 “(4) the County Council agrees that such action is consistent with the intent of the DRRA and
16 expedites the process for providing the much-needed mixed income housing required by the
17 DRRA; and”.

18
19 On page 3, in line 12, strike “4” and substitute “5”.



Howard County

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Testimony and Fiscal Impact Statement
Central Library, Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement

To: Brandee Ganz
Chief Administrative Officer

From: Felix Facchine, Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of the County Executive

Date: October 23, 2025

PURPOSE

Council Resolution No. CR__-2025, seeks action by the County Council to endorse next steps to implement the Downtown Columbia Plan and the Downtown Columbia Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) with respect to the Central Library. The Resolution endorses action by the County Executive to enter into a purchase and sale agreement with Howard Research and Development Corporation (HRD) for the fee simple acquisition of land for a new Central Library at the Columbia Lakefront, draft a land swap agreement pursuant to the DRRA, and prepare a project financing plan for inclusion in the FY2027 capital budget.

BACKGROUND

The Downtown Columbia Plan was unanimously approved by the County Council on February 1, 2010, by CB58-2009. The Downtown Columbia Plan was a General Plan Amendment that adopted the revitalization and redevelopment plan for Downtown Columbia over a 30-year planning horizon. On November 9, 2016, the Downtown Columbia Plan was amended by CB52-2016, which revised the Downtown Columbia affordable housing program and provided a new plan for affordable housing in Downtown Columbia. Along with the amendment to the Downtown Columbia Plan, the County Council approved and authorized the execution of a Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) between Howard Research and Development Corporation (HRD) and Howard County on November 9, 2016. The DRRA outlined implementation of the affordable housing plan for Downtown Columbia, which includes the creation of 900 Affordable Units at or before Full Residential Build Out in Downtown Columbia. Of these 900 Affordable Units, 417 Low Income Units are required to be built by the Howard County Housing Commission (HCHC) in partnership with the County, HRD, and the Columbia Downtown Housing Corporation (CDHC).

The Downtown Columbia Plan and the DRRA also called for the development of a new Central Library in Downtown Columbia. Planning for a new Central Library has been in the works for nearly 20 years. In 2008, Howard County Library System's (HCLS) Master Plan called for a new Central Library. In 2010, the Downtown Columbia Plan was approved, which called for a new Central Library in Downtown Columbia that "could move the Howard County Library in the direction of an 'Experience Library,' an intellectual, interactive learning center combining visual exhibitions with interesting architecture and typical library elements." In 2016, the DRRA reaffirmed the plans to construct a new Central Library in Downtown Columbia. In 2019, Howard County Library System hired G4 Architecture, a firm that works with libraries across the country, to update its Master Plan, underscoring the prioritization of a new Central Library.

In Spring 2023, the County announced plans to construct a new Central Library branch at the Columbia Lakefront. That same year, the State of Maryland contributed \$10 million in restricted grant funding to advance planning and design of a new Central Library at the Columbia Lakefront. Locating the Central Library at the Columbia Lakefront creates more capacity for mixed income housing at the Merriweather site originally designated for the library in conjunction with affordable housing in the DRRA. This plan also accelerates the redevelopment of the existing library site for much-needed mixed-income housing.

After approximately two years of additional public engagement and planning, in May 2025, the County Council directed the County Executive to advance plans for the new Central Library at the Columbia Lakefront by purchasing land for the library from HRD in fee simple. The County has engaged with HRD, HCLS, and HCHC during Summer and Fall 2025 to discuss parameters of a land transaction for the new Central Library and the Merriweather Affordable Housing site. Under this arrangement, HRD intends to sell a portion of the property located at 10227 Wincopin Circle in fee simple to Howard County for purposes of the County constructing a New Central Library consistent with the conceptual design presented in March of 2023. Pursuant to Section 4.4.C. of the DRRA, HRD is also prepared to enter into a purchase and sale agreement to convey the C-1 parcel in the Merriweather District, for mixed-income housing as referenced in the DRRA, at no cost to County, which will then convey the parcel to HCHC.

This Council Resolution endorses action by the County Executive to enter into a purchase and sale agreement with Howard Research and Development Corporation (HRD) for the fee simple acquisition of land for a new Central Library at the Columbia Lakefront, draft a land swap agreement pursuant to the DRRA, and prepare a project financing plan for inclusion in the FY2027 capital budget.

FISCAL IMPACT

The County does not anticipate any fiscal impact resulting from this resolution. Once a purchase and sale agreement has been negotiated, the County Executive intends to seek appropriation from the County Council in the FY27 capital budget for the purposes of land acquisition, at which time a fiscal impact will be prepared.

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

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Legislative Day No. 15

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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 Nov 3, 2025.

By order

Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Read for a second time at a public hearing on Nov 19, 2025.

By order

Michelle Harrod
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

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2 place for the Howard County community, whether for the 4th of July, Lakefest, and many other
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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.”;
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23 County and Howard Research And Development Corporation (HRD) through the Development
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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
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1 **WHEREAS**, locating the New Central Library on the Kittamaquundi 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 accelerate the redevelopment of the
4 existing library site for much-needed mixed-income housing; and

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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

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11 County for purposes of the County constructing a New Central Library consistent with the
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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.

Amendment No. 1 to Council Resolution No. 223-2025

BY: The Chairperson at the request
of the County Executive

Legislative Day No. 17
Date: December 1, 2025

Amendment No. 1

(This amendment alters the narrative around the conveyance of the C-1 parcel to the Housing Commission in order to expedite the process of providing mixed income housing.)

In the title:

1. In the fourth line, after “negotiate”, strike “a land swap agreement for” and substitute “agreements for the conveyance of” and strike “pursuant to”; and
2. In the fifth line strike “4.4.C of” and substitute “to satisfy the requirements of”.

On page 2, strike lines 14 through 19, inclusive and in their entirety and substitute:

“WHEREAS, Section 4.4.C. of the DRRA provides that HRD shall convey the C-1 parcel in the Merriweather District for the Howard County Housing Commission (the “Commission”) to construct mixed-income housing; and

WHEREAS, the County and HRD, after consultation with the Commission, agreed that in order to expedite mixed income housing in the Merriweather District, by no later than the date of the County’s entry into a purchase and sale agreement with HRD for the purchase of the Lakefront Library Property, HRD will enter into an agreement with the County, which will memorialize that HRD will convey the C-1 parcel to the Commission directly by a date that is no later than the County’s acquisition of the Lakefront Library Property, all of which is consistent with the DRRA; and”.

On page 2, in line 22, strike “to HRD, and HRD will subsequently”.

On page 2, in line 23, strike “convey the Existing Central Library Site” and substitute “directly” and, in the same line, strike “pursuant to” and substitute “consistent with”.

1 On page 3, in line 6, strike “draft a land swap” and substitute “negotiate”.

2
3 On page 3, in line 7, strike “agreement pursuant to” and substitute “agreements consistent with”.

4
5 On page 3, in line 8, strike the first “County” and substitute “Commission”.

6
7 On page 3, in line 9, strike “HRD” and substitute “the Commission” and strike “are to”.

8
9 On page 3, in line 10, strike “ultimately be conveyed to the Commission” and substitute “will be
10 used”.

11
12 On page 3, in line 11, strike “and”.

13
14 On page 3, after line 11, insert:

15 “(4) the County Council agrees that such action is consistent with the intent of the DRRA and
16 expedites the process for providing the much-needed mixed income housing required by the
17 DRRA; and”.

18
19 On page 3, in line 12, strike “4” and substitute “5”.