

Council Bill 64-2025 Fiscal Analysis

Introduced: September 2, 2025

Fiscal Manager: Owen Kahn

Legislative Intent: This legislation approves a ten-year lease for the Howard County Arts Council to use 22,940 square feet in the newly renovated Historic Circuit Courthouse in Ellicott City.

ANALYSIS

Fiscal Impact:

<u>FY 2026 Operating Budget Line:</u> Department of General Services New Programs/Initiatives - Operating/Maintenance of 3 Facilities ¹			
	<u>Approved</u>	<u>County Expenditures</u>	<u>County Revenues</u>
FY 2026	\$1,339,567	<i>Not affected.</i>	<i>Not affected.</i>

This legislation will not have an impact on the approved County operating budget. The [Howard County Arts Council](#) will pay symbolic rent to the County of \$1 per year for the ten-year term, beginning on December 1st, 2025, and ending on November 30th, 2035. This legislation will terminate the \$1 per year [2017](#) lease agreement for the Arts Council at the High Ridge Road location.

The County will continue to incur the costs of utilities and maintenance for the property, including HVAC, electric, water, plumbing, and landscaping services. In the FY 2026 capital budget book ([Project C0371-FY2025 Former Circuit Courthouse Renovation](#)), the Department of General Services estimated that operating costs would be \$987,000 per year, beginning in FY 2026.² This will be the first year since the facility's renovation that it will be in use.

Budget Implications:

- The County spent \$12,340,000 renovating the Historic Circuit Courthouse, approved in capital budget [Project C0371-FY2025 Former Circuit Courthouse Renovation](#)).³ This was funded using PAYGO, federal grants, and State bonds.
- Because this is a ten-year lease that affects future fiscal years, [Section 612 of the County Charter](#) requires Council approval for the lease agreement.
- [Section Sec. 12.800 of the County Code](#) states that it is “desirable for the County Government to encourage and assist a private, independent, nonpartisan County Arts Council.” This is the legislative justification for leasing County space without payment.

Other Notes:

- Other tenants are likely to include Roving Radish and an AAPI Cultural Center.

¹ Page 194

² Page 132

³ Page 132