

Council Bill 69-2025 Fiscal Analysis

Introduced: November 3, 2025

Fiscal Manager: Yusef Ibrahim

Legislative Intent: Council Bill 69-2025 is an emergency act (under Section 610(b) of the Howard County Charter) that amends the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2026 ([CB36-2025](#)) by striking a condition added via Amendment [No.14-2025](#). The condition restricted the use of \$5 million in State grant funding appropriated to the New HCLS Central Branch & Relocation project (Capital Project L0020), unless the County completed the fee simple purchase of the property at 10227 Wincopin Circle, Columbia, MD 21044 by September 15, 2025.

The Administration has determined that it was not possible to meet the condition by the required date. Therefore, this bill seeks to remove the obsolete restriction, allowing the County to proceed with planning, design, and negotiations for the new Central Library.

ANALYSIS

Fiscal Impact:

Eliminating the condition would make available to the Administration \$5 million from the FY26 State grant that was appropriated during the FY26 Capital Budget. The total State grant for a new library is \$10 million, of which the other \$5 million was previously appropriated without conditions in FY24 (but remains unspent).

The Administration has confirmed that no portion of the FY26 appropriation is intended for land acquisition and that any future land purchase would be subject to appropriation in the FY27 Capital Budget. Therefore, any further funding for the project will have to be approved by Council.

Budget Implications:

FY 2026 Capital Budget Line¹: The adoption of this legislation will not have an immediate impact on the FY26 budget, as the funding has already been appropriated².

The County Executive intends to include a financing plan for the land acquisition in the FY27 Capital Budget. The current action allows the County to use existing funds for predevelopment activities consistent with the project's conceptual design.

Other Notes:

The removal of the condition aligns with the phased development strategy outlined in CR223-2025 (currently under consideration by the Council), which authorizes the County Executive to negotiate a land swap and prepare a financing plan for FY27. The Administration has committed to providing regular updates to the Council on design, construction, and land negotiations.

¹ Page 419 in the HC FY26 Capital Budget

² See Appendix A for a summary of life-to-date budgetary appropriations associated with the New HCLS Central Branch & Relocation project

Appendix A – Life-to-Date Budget Appropriations for HCLS Central Branch & Relocation

Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Funding Source(s)	Purpose / Notes
FY23	\$488,000	Other County Funds	
FY24	\$5,000,000	State Grant	First major state grant; no condition. Funds unspent. State grant funds expire 6/1/2030.
FY25	\$0	N/A	No new appropriation; project remained in the predevelopment phase.
FY26	\$5,000,000	State Grant	Restricted by condition (property purchase). CB69-2025 removes restriction. State grant funds expire 6/1/2031.
Total to Date	\$10,488,000	State Grants + Other County Funds	Includes \$488K in local funds and \$10M in State grants.