



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

COUNCILMEMBERS

Opel Jones, Chair
District 2
Christiana Rigby, Vice Chair
District 3
Liz Walsh
District 1
Deb Jung
District 4
David Yungmann
District 5

Minutes – Approved

Legislative Work Session
Monday, March 23, 2026
Hybrid Meeting (Virtual and In-Person Meeting)
Video Streamed on <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/watch-us>
10:00 a.m.

Chair Jones called the Work Session to order at 10:04 a.m.

Councilmembers present: Chair Opel Jones; Vice Chair Christiana Rigby; Councilmember Deb Jung; Councilmember Liz Walsh; and Councilmember David Yungmann.

Staff present: Michelle Harrod, Council Administrator; Gary Kuc, County Solicitor; Amanda Mahill, Assistant County Solicitor; Isaiah Anderson, Executive Assistant I Theo Wimberly, Administrative Manager; Yusef Ibrahim, Deputy Council Administrator; Jim Almon, Legislative Analyst; Nick Reinhardt, Legislative Analyst; Owen Kahn, Fiscal Manager II; Melinda Massey, Fiscal Manager; and Patrica Hammond, Administrative Assistant.

Agenda

CR40-2026 - Introduced by The Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

Short Title: Charter Amendment – Section 601, Fiscal year and tax year and definitions

Title: A RESOLUTION proposing to amend County Charter Section 601, Fiscal year and tax year and definitions, in order to define the term “affordable housing projects, financed in whole or in part by the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund” which will allow the County to fund the Trust Fund with bonds; and submitting this amendment to the voters of Howard County for their adoption or rejection in accordance with Article X of the Howard County Charter and Article XI-A of the Maryland Constitution.

Kelly Cimino the Director of the Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development and Peter Engel the Executive Director of the Howard County Housing Commission appeared before the Council to discuss CR40-2026 and affordable housing generally.

Ms. Cimino and Mr. Engle discussed the County’s Housing Opportunities Trust Fund describing its function and funding sources. Ms. Cimino and Mr. Engel stated that CR40-2026 would provide the County with additional tools to construct affordable housing by allowing the construction of affordable housing projects in the County to be supported by

bond funding. Ms. Cimino also discussed how neighboring jurisdictions fund their Affordable Housing Trust Funds and how those trust funds operate.

Councilmembers asked Ms. Cimino and Mr. Engle about the past funding of the County's Housing Opportunity Trust Fund and how many affordable housing units have been created based on that previous funding. Councilmembers also asked about the differences between the requirements included in neighboring jurisdictions Affordable Housing Opportunity Trust Funds and the County's Housing Opportunities Trust Fund.

Mr. Engle stated that the proposed Resolution is a Charter Amendment and the County Council would have the authority to propose legislation to include conditions or requirements to how affordable housing projects are funded by the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund.

Councilmembers discussed their concerns with using bonds to fund affordable housing projects and asked questions regarding potential affects to the County's bond rating. Councilmembers also discussed affordable housing generally.

Council requested follow-up:

- *How many new affordable units have been created by the use of \$15 million spent within the Housing Opportunity Trust Fund?*
- *What properties have been offered to the County/Housing Commission under the Right of First Refusal and what were the outcomes of those offers?*
- *What is the current Community Renewal Fund balance as of the end of February 2026?*

Chair Jones adjourned the Work Session at: 11:15 a.m.

Participants:

CR40-2026

County Executive Representative

Kelly Cimino, Director Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development

Peter Engle, Executive Director Howard County Housing Commission

Persons needing accommodations to fully participate in the meeting, please contact the Council Office, 410-313-2001 or email CouncilADA@howardcountymd.gov