
From: Alyse Carter <carter.alyse7@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 1:33 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Capital Budget FY27 Testimony

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear County Council,

Good afternoon! Below, please see written testimony in support of the Lakefront Library project as part of the FY27 Capital Budget:

As a member of the Board of Directors for the Downtown Columbia Partnership, I am testifying in support for the funding of the next stage of the new Lakefront Library construction in Downtown Columbia.

The Downtown Columbia Partnership is tasked to "... promote the growth and vitality of this community and its businesses, implement beautification projects, support transportation initiatives, and host events that bring people together." A state of the art, innovative library in Downtown Columbia, overlooking the iconic Lake Kittamaqundi would provide the missing puzzle piece our lakefront community has been desperately needing as well as aid us in executing our mission.

Libraries are an enhanced center for learning, civic engagement, early childhood development and so much more. They provide community third spaces, inclusive environments, and a plethora of free resources for individuals of all ages. The Howard County Public Library System has 6 wonderful locations servicing Howard County residents, in addition to a pop-up library and STEAM machine mobiles. While our beloved Central Branch has been integral for the Downtown Columbia community, its infrastructure and capabilities have been surpassed by other branches and even other Maryland county library facilities. The proposed plan for a new Lakefront Library is a vision the community of Downtown Columbia deserves and an integral keystone to the 2010 Downtown Columbia Plan. A central and visible location will become a driver for additional programming at the Lakefront – enhancing community efforts of MACC and Columbia Association. Increased, consistent activity will serve as a catalyst for economic impact to the restaurants and businesses along the Lakefront.

As a child who visited the Lakefront frequently, to now, myself, being an adult who has worked, lived and played in Downtown Columbia the way James Rouse envisioned it, a beautiful library at the heart of Downtown Columbia would symbolize more than just a changing landscape. It would speak to the growth, innovation and collaboration of a community that is diverse and in need of representation. Columbia is often cited as a visionary urban district and one of the top places to live and work in the country. We deserve a library that supports this vision and enhances it further. We trust the County

Executive and County Council will share in this vision and support other community leaders who are working to create the reality of a Lakefront Library enhancing education for all ages, encouraging creativity, advancing literacy and, most importantly, creating a community space that serves all.

--

Alyse Carter

E: carter.alyse7@gmail.com

C: (410) 948-7308

From: Angie Boyter <angie.boyter@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 7:20 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jung, Debra; davidyungmann@hcmove.net; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana
Subject: Testimony on the Proposed New Library
Attachments: Proposed New Library by the Lake.docx

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Attached is my testimony on the proposed library.

The testimony sign-up email said I should send seven copies as well, but it did not say where to send them. I would assume that one electronic copy to the right place would be sufficient. If there is a different address to which I should send it please let me know or forward it to that address.

Thank you, and please pick a better place for a new library!

Angie Boyter

My name is Angela Boyter. I am an AVID reader and a former president of the Friends of the Howard County library. I have been a fan of public libraries since my mother introduced me to Enoch Pratt Free Library when I was about 5 years old. However, I am here to testify AGAINST the proposed library on the lake in downtown Columbia.

I have lived at 3914 MacAlpine Road in Ellicott City since 1967 and have watched the growth of Columbia since its inception. Our New Town is a great asset to the county, and one of its most outstanding features is Lake Kittamaqundi. The lake area serves a large selection of people from all over the county and elsewhere for a very wide variety of activities. We need more open public amenities like this and should absolutely not reduce access by building a library. Jim Rouse would be aghast!!

If we want to improve library services, we should take the money proposed for this new site and invest in more ebooks to serve modern readers. Our collection of ebooks is disgracefully small, MUCH smaller than Baltimore County's collection. Providing more ebooks would serve a very broad part of the community. Young people use digital devices very heavily and would be more attracted to books if they could read them on their phones or kindles or iPads. However, ebooks are also a real boon to octogenarians like me. First of all, many of us are cutting down on or even eliminating driving, and they eliminate the need to get to the library in person. Second, once we get that ebook, we can enlarge the print!

One of the many things we have enjoyed about Howard County is our excellent library. Please continue to provide us with great library services using modern techniques that will not impinge on our other amenities like the lakefront.

From: Barbara Lawson <bklawson@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 11:58 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Downtown Library
Attachments: Testimony CB-2025 .docx

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Good morning County Council

I certainly know the realities of our county finances, and yet I believe the downtown library to be an essential and needed community asset, therefore I am resubmitting my letter of support from November, You have many important issues to consider concerning the FY 27 budget and not easy decisions. Please give the downtown library careful consideration.

Thank-you
Barbara K. Lawson

To: Howard County Council

From: Barbara K. Lawson

Re: CB69-2025

Date: November 19, 2025

I am Barbara Lawson and I am testifying in favor of CB69-2025. This might surprise some of you, as I am usually here on behalf of the Spending Affordability Committee and urging fiscal prudence i.e. balancing expenditures with projected revenue and limiting long-term bond debt.

Despite my fiscally conservative stance, I believe there are community institutions and service, which have out-sized value, both tangible and intangible. The Central Library is one of those institutions and its' location is critical to building a strong Howard County community. I consider it an essential investment!

In 1962, I was fifteen years old and began my first job as a page at the Port Angeles Public Library, a Carnegie library built in 1919 and still standing. The Carnegie libraries across our nation have proven to be enduring investments in community infrastructure and the vehicle for individual learning and growing.

Public libraries have changed with the times, but they remain a place welcoming everyone in the community. Think about, it how many places and/or spaces are welcoming to everyone? When you think of a library what comes to mind is books, a place of sharing knowledge, however a hallmark of a library is what I call hospitality - welcoming everyone – providing a welcome mat, a place of acceptance and help.

The location and access to a library is statement in and of itself. My childhood library was built next to the Courthouse, the veterans memorial, and within the heart of the commercial district of this logging town. Plaid flannel shirts and work boots were as welcome as any other dress. A library is where everyone belongs.

Libraries have always been community spaces and today when communities are fragmented and divisive they provide a safe space for all. Books are checked out, reference materials are explored, children have reading groups, English is taught, the unemployed have computer access. I don't have to recite all the services, which are invaluable and tangible. The intangible – the access to a safe and welcoming space is equally important.

While it is taking a little longer to work out the details of the acquisition of the property for the new Central Library, there is no question that its' location in the

heart of Columbia, next to the Millie Bailey playground, the new veteran's memorial, the pathway system, and summer concerts should make it one of the most important community institutions to proudly anchor Columbia downtown.

I urge you to support the legislation moving us one step closer to realizing the fulfillment of the Downtown Columbia Plan, and I daresay a vision of what a truly inclusive community can be.

From: Brandon Cogdell <brandon.cogdell-wlvb@wildelake.org>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 1:41 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support for New Central Branch Library

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Good afternoon,

Chair Walsh and members of the County Council.

My name is Brandon Cogdell, and I serve as the Education Committee Chair of the Wilde Lake Community Association and as a partner in the Club Wilde Lake after-school program. I advocate for our youth through our committee, and I see the challenges they face when they do not have enough safe, positive places to go after school. That is why I want to express my strong support for Council Bill No. 69 and the construction of the new Central Branch Library on the Columbia Waterfront.

This isn't just about replacing a building. It's about responding to the real needs of our young people. Recent violence in our community is not happening in isolation—there is a clear connection to the lack of accessible, enriching outlets for our students. And with new mall policies restricting where teens can gather, our youth are hungry for a space where they feel welcome, supported, and safe.

A state-of-the-art Central Branch Library on the Waterfront will be exactly that kind of place. It will be a major attraction for teens seeking meaningful activities and a positive environment after school. From my work advocating for our students, I can tell you: when young people are given safe spaces, caring adults, and opportunities to explore and learn, they rise. They show their potential.

This new library will help unlock that potential. It will provide a vibrant, modern environment where youth can study, create, access critical resources, and connect with mentors who can help guide their paths. It will be more than a library—it will be a cornerstone for youth development and community well-being.

As someone deeply invested in the future of our young people, I truly believe this project will change lives. I respectfully urge your support for Council Bill No. 69 and for the future of the Central Branch Library.

Brandon Cogdell

From: Darcy Rollow <darcyhealing@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 1:27 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: community center

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

From: Emily Zumstein <emilyzumstein1@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 12:53 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: New Central Library

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

--Emily Zumstein

From: Joan Lancos <joanlancos@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 2:43 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: budget testimony Lakefront Library
Attachments: library support 4.13.26.docx

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Attached please find my written testimony regarding continued funding for the Lakefront Library.

Joan Lancos
443-812-6003

From: Joe Zerafa <joseph.p.zerafa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 12:38 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Columbia Social support for new central branch library funding

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,
Joe Zerafa
Columbia Resident
Founder, Columbia Social

From: Lena Ghamrawi <lana.ghamrawi@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 2:59 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Library support

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

Lena Ghamrawi

From: Maeve Flanagan <maevecflanagan@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 5:43 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Testimony for the New Library

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Council members, this new, larger library would provide an essential third space that we currently do not have. As a student, myself and my peers live in small town houses making meeting up as a group impractical. However, this new library would provide us with plenty of space and resources to study, learn, and hangout. This is especially prevalent as I will be going to high school next year, and cannot use that library after school. The new library would allow for me and my friends to form study groups and generally hang out in a public space together nearby. Being able to hang out in the library to study would be extremely helpful as there wouldn't be any distractions like siblings. Additionally, the library would have enough space so that as an actor, me and my friends can run lines and scenes together easily. The current central library just doesn't have enough space to do these things effectively.

From: Ryan Hermann <ryan@hermann.tech>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 5:04 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support For the Lakefront Library

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

Ryan Hermann

From: sadie weis <sadieweis@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 7:33 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support for new Columbia library

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

Sadie Weis, Columbia resident

From: Sean Foley <131sean131@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 5:14 PM
To: CouncilMail

Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

My name is Sean Foley

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and a member of Columbia Social, a local organization focused on building community among young professionals in their 20s and 30s. Our group is committed to helping ensure Columbia remains a vibrant, welcoming place for current and future residents to live, work, and grow.

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Columbia Central Library project and respectfully request that the County Council approve the budget amendment that would allow the County to accept the state and federal grant funding allocated for its construction.

A new central library represents a meaningful investment in Columbia's future — expanding access to educational resources, workforce development programs, and shared community space for residents of all ages. Just as importantly, advancing this project will help unlock opportunities for much-needed housing that supports continued growth and accessibility within our community.

Investments like this play a critical role in ensuring Columbia remains an inclusive and thriving place for the next generation of residents who want to build their lives here.

Thank you for your continued leadership and consideration.

Sean Foley
410-739-2059