

Introduced \_\_\_\_\_  
Public hearing \_\_\_\_\_  
Council action \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive action \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective date \_\_\_\_\_

## County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2009 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 15

### **BILL NO. 58-2009**

Introduced by  
The Chair at the request of General Growth Properties

**AN ACT** adopting the Downtown Columbia Plan, a General Plan Amendment for the purpose of revitalizing and redeveloping Downtown Columbia; and generally relating to the Downtown Columbia Plan, a General Plan Amendment.

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Introduced and read first time \_\_\_\_\_, 2009. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

Having been posted & notice of time & place of hearing and title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009 and concluded on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

This Bill was read the third time \_\_\_\_\_, 2009 and Passed \_\_\_\_, Passed with amendments \_\_\_\_, Failed \_\_\_\_,

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009 at \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

Approved/vetoed by the County Executive on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ken Ulman, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN ALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law. ~~Strikeout~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1           **WHEREAS**, Jim Rouse’s vision for Columbia established a quartet of main  
2 objectives:

- 3           1.       To provide a real City – not just a better suburb, but a comprehensively  
4                   balanced community...;
- 5           2.       To respect the land. With sets of overlays we recorded the topography, the  
6                   stream valleys, the forests, the southeastern slopes, the historic buildings, the  
7                   special vistas, the quiet tree lined areas. We allowed the land to impose itself  
8                   as a discipline on the form of the Community...;
- 9           3.       To provide the best environment for the growth of people. It would seem  
10                  elementary that cities should be planned for people... We want to allow these  
11                  overlays, these insights about people, to influence the physical plan and the  
12                  institutions we should seek to stimulate in the community just as we allow the  
13                  plan to be influenced by the land itself...; and
- 14           4.       Our fourth goal was profit. This was no residual goal, not something just  
15                  hoped for. It was our primary objective;<sup>1</sup> and  
16

17           **WHEREAS**, on May 17, 1965, the Howard County Planning Commission, after  
18 public hearing, adopted a Supplement to the Text of the 1960 Howard County General Plan to  
19 guide the construction of New Towns, New Communities and Large-Scale neighborhoods  
20 which guided the creation of the New Town floating district; and  
21

22           **WHEREAS**, on July 13, 1965, the Board of County Commissioners of Howard  
23 County held a public hearing for the reclassification of 13,690 acres of land to the New Town  
24 District; and  
25

26           **WHEREAS**, by Opinion and Order dated August 10, 1965, the Board of  
27 Commissioners granted the rezoning “in order to give maximum assurance to the developers  
28 and the public of our intention to do all we can to see the project succeed”; and  
29

30           **WHEREAS**, Columbia is a vibrant, diverse community which has achieved much of  
31 Jim Rouse’s vision for Columbia as “the most livable, the most beautiful and the most  
32 effective city in America”; and  
33

34           **WHEREAS**, Jim Rouse also understood that Columbia would “take a long time to

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<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from “Downtown Columbia: A Community Vision”. (Source: “Great Cities for a Great Society,” speech given to the Chicago Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects on April 8, 1965. Provided courtesy of the Columbia Archives.)

1 complete, maybe never, we hope never”; and

2  
3 **WHEREAS**, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland expressly states that  
4 each Charter County of the State shall enact, adopt, amend and execute a General Plan; and

5  
6 **WHEREAS**, the most recently adopted 2000 Howard County General Plan includes,  
7 but is not limited to, policies and action plans for land use, regional coordination,  
8 transportation, rural preservation, infrastructure and the environment; and

9  
10 **WHEREAS**, the 2000 Howard County General Plan also sets forth a central theme of  
11 sustainable development through a series of visions which encompass, but are not limited to,  
12 quality of life, public participation, community design, housing and economic development;  
13 and

14  
15 **WHEREAS**, the 2000 Howard County General Plan also recognizes Downtown  
16 Columbia as the County’s largest and most urban mixed-use center and establishes a policy  
17 and implementing actions to encourage Downtown Columbia’s continuing evolution and  
18 growth as the County’s urban center (Policy 5.5); and

19  
20 **WHEREAS**, the 2000 Howard County General Plan has been amended a dozen times  
21 in accordance with County Council bill procedures; and

22  
23 **WHEREAS**, in 2005, the Howard County Government led a week-long Charrette to  
24 gather thoughts from the community as to how Downtown Columbia should be redeveloped;  
25 and

26  
27 **WHEREAS**, in 2005 and 2006, the Downtown Focus Group, a committee of  
28 community leaders, met 15 times with the Howard County Department of Planning and  
29 Zoning to discuss key issues and offer advice regarding redevelopment of Downtown  
30 Columbia; and

1           **WHEREAS**, in 2007, after additional community input, the County Executive,  
2 through the Department of Planning and Zoning, released “Downtown Columbia: A  
3 Community Vision” which articulates planning guidelines for the redevelopment of  
4 Downtown Columbia; and

5  
6           **WHEREAS**, “Downtown Columbia: A Community Vision” provided that General  
7 Growth Properties would prepare a general plan amendment and zoning regulation  
8 amendment for submittal to the County Council; and

9  
10           **WHEREAS**, “Downtown Columbia: A Community Vision” also explicitly provided  
11 that the proposed amendments “would be introduced to the public at the same time, so that the  
12 relationship between the downtown development master plan and its implementation through  
13 the *Zoning Regulations* would be clearly understood”; and

14  
15           **WHEREAS**, on October 1, 2008, General Growth Properties formally submitted its  
16 Downtown Columbia redevelopment package consisting of a zoning regulation amendment  
17 and a general plan amendment, along with the following supplemental documents:

- 18           1. Adequate Public Facilities Amendment (draft proposal);
- 19           2. Columbia Town Center Sustainability Framework;
- 20           3. Columbia Town Center Merriweather and Crescent Environmental Enhancements  
21           Study;
- 22           4. Columbia Town Center Design Guidelines (draft proposal);
- 23           5. Columbia Town Center Generalized Traffic Study;
- 24           6. Columbia Town Center Generalized Traffic Study, Technical Appendix; and
- 25           7. Best Management Practices for Symphony Stream and Lake Kittamaquondi  
26           Watersheds; and

27  
28           **WHEREAS**, the Howard County Planning Board, following advertisement for 30  
29 days, held a series of public hearings/meetings and heard public testimony on December 11,  
30 2008, January 8 and 22, 2009, February 5, 2009 and March 5 and 19, 2009; and

1           **WHEREAS**, the Howard County Planning Board also conducted a series of public  
2 worksessions on April 13 and 30, 2009, May 14 and 27, 2009, June 11 and 25, 2009, July 9,  
3 16 and 23, 2009, August 20, 2009 and September 2 and 3, 2009; and  
4

5           **WHEREAS**, on September 17, 2009, the Planning Board recommended approval with  
6 recommended changes to the general plan amendment; and  
7

8           **WHEREAS**, the attached Downtown Columbia Plan, a General Plan Amendment, is  
9 being considered together with a bill proposing the adoption of a zoning regulation  
10 amendment based on Zoning Regulation Amendment 113 as amended pursuant to the  
11 recommendations of the Department of Planning and Zoning and the Planning Board; and  
12

13           **WHEREAS**, the zoning regulation amendment is the principal means of  
14 implementing the revitalization and redevelopment plan for Downtown Columbia; and  
15

16           **WHEREAS**, the attached Downtown Columbia Plan will be implemented by  
17 additional legislation, including but not limited to, Downtown Columbia Design Guidelines  
18 and amendments to the Adequate Public Facilities Act, the Design Advisory Panel and the  
19 Green Buildings Law; and  
20

21           **WHEREAS**, these implementing mechanisms will promote the ongoing evolution of  
22 Downtown Columbia in a manner that reflects its unique character and aspirations in order to  
23 become a model for smarter, more livable communities.  
24

25           **NOW THEREFORE:**  
26

27           *Section 1. Be it enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that*  
28 *the Downtown Columbia Plan, a General Plan Amendment attached hereto, is adopted as the*  
29 *revitalization and redevelopment plan for Downtown Columbia.*  
30

31           *Section 2. Be it further enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland,*

1    *that the Downtown Columbia Plan, a General Plan Amendment, shall become effective 61*  
2    *days after its enactment.*  
3