

# Smarter Growth Alliance for Howard County

---

January 18, 2020

The Honorable Howard County Council  
George Howard Building  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

**RE: CR14-2020, Adoption of WalkHoward – Support**

Dear Council Members:

The Smarter Growth Alliance for Howard County is an alliance of local and state organizations working together to foster healthy, equitable and sustainable communities through smarter development and transportation decisions and improved protections for the county's natural, historic and cultural resources.

We support Resolution 14-2020 to adopt the Howard County Pedestrian Master Plan, WalkHoward. Howard County needs better sidewalks, crosswalks, bus landing pads and paths so people can safely and comfortably walk anywhere they need to go. Investing in our pedestrian infrastructure will positively impact our environment, public health and economic vibrancy.

We appreciate the great work that went into developing WalkHoward, which outlines a vision, goals, guiding principles and recommendations to create a more walkable Howard County. As an alliance that values equity and inclusion, we are pleased that the project prioritization process will take existing conditions, community destinations and socioeconomic factors into consideration to make sidewalks and pedestrian facilities safer and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The plan will also utilize the Vulnerable Populations Index (VPI) and performance measures included in the Complete Streets Policy (CR120-2019) to yield greater coordination and accountability. Indeed, it is crucial to implement these projects in neighborhoods with the most need first.

Fortunately, we have witnessed historic investments in biking and walking over the last few years – and it is critical for that trend to continue. Implementing WalkHoward will require significant investment over the next several years. The Smarter Growth Alliance urges the County Executive and County Council to put forth the necessary funding to ensure projects and priority connections are completed in a timely fashion.

*Audubon MD-DC • Audubon Society of Central Maryland • Clean Water Action • Coalition for Smarter Growth  
Community Ecology Institute • Earth Forum of Howard County • HARP • Horizon Foundation  
Howard County Citizens Association • Howard County Conservancy • Howard County Sierra Club  
Maryland Conservation Council • Maryland League of Conservation Voters • Maryland Ornithological Society  
Patapsco Heritage Greenway • Preservation Maryland • Safe Skies Maryland • Savage Community Association  
The People's Voice • Transition Howard County*

The Honorable Howard County Council  
January 18, 2020  
RE: CR14-2020, Adoption of WalkHoward – Support  
Page 2

Again, WalkHoward provides a clear trajectory forward. Now is the time to get the job done. The Smarter Growth Alliance for Howard County looks forward to seeing WalkHoward become reality and positively impact the lives of Howard County residents.

Sincerely,

Bicycling Advocates of Howard County  
Jack Guarneri  
President

Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Benjamin Alexandro  
Water Program Director

Clean Water Action  
Emily Ranson  
Maryland Program Coordinator

Preservation Maryland  
Kimberly Golden Brandt  
Director of Smart Growth Maryland

Earth Forum of Howard County  
Sue L. Harris  
Director

Safe Skies Maryland  
Mark Southerland, Ph.D.  
Legislative Director

Horizon Foundation  
Jennifer Arice White, MSPH  
Senior Community Engagement Officer

Savage Community Association  
Susan Garber  
Board Chair

Howard County Citizens Association  
Stu Kohn  
President

The People's Voice, LLC  
Lisa M. Markovitz  
President

Howard County Sierra Club  
Carolyn Parsa  
Chair

Transition Howard County  
Margo Duesterhaus  
President

Maryland Conservation Council  
Paulette Hammond  
President

cc: The Honorable Calvin Ball, County Executive