

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Bill No. 59-2024 (ZRA 207)

Introduced: October 7, 2024

Auditor: Rebecca Gold

Fiscal Impact:

Our Office is unable to determine the future fiscal impact of this legislation because we cannot estimate the demand for future development of Indoor Self-Storage Facilities in Business: General (B-2) zoning districts.

According to the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), implementing a conditional use will not entail an additional workload to the County. Fees are assessed to the property owner for new development standard site inspections which cover the cost of staff time.

Purpose:

Council Bill 59-2024 will allow development of certain Indoor Self-Storage Facilities as a conditional use in B-2 zoning districts, amending Section 131.0 of the Howard County Code.

Other Comments:

The Planning Board's Technical Staff Report indicated that 30 properties could become eligible for the proposed conditional use as a result of this amendment. Eleven of those sites are located in HoCo By Design Activity Centers. The DPZ is not currently aware of any sites (other than the petitioner's) with plans to develop Indoor Self-Storage Facilities.

The Planning Board stated concerns that allowing Indoor Self-Storage Facilities in Activity Centers might not be compatible with the design goals for those centers. It recommended the inclusion of additional conditional use criteria, with a requirement that the Hearing Authority evaluate the proposed plans for any new Indoor Self-Storage Facilities in an Activity Center.

Howard County's Design Advisory Panel will review any project plans subject to the Route 1 and Route 40 design manuals, to ensure compliance with those design requirements.