



Howard County press release:

On September 23, 2024, the Howard County Commissioners Court unanimously approved a policy to assist property owners by providing county labor, services, and materials to construct public improvements such as roads and drainage structures.

The Commissioners Court recognizes that there are public facilities that were not constructed at the time of development. The result is unsafe and inconvenient roads that residential and commercial traffic including county service vehicles must use to access private property. In some places, this may result in threatening conditions for life and property.

The County assistance will serve as an “in kind” match to funding provided by affected landowners. County assistance is dependent upon the operating budget and desired timing of new or upgraded infrastructure. No changes have been made to the subdivision regulations. The approved policy signifies the County’s interest in promoting safety and maintaining property values.



Policy for Howard County Infrastructure Assistance

Statement of Need and Purpose

One of the major functions of county government is to maintain a network of roads and bridges in unincorporated areas of the county. The Howard County Road and Bridge Department has this responsibility.

Howard County recognizes that there are many infrastructure needs throughout the county. In 2023 the County adopted revised subdivision regulations pursuant to state law. The regulations require that a developer wishing to subdivide land into lots for sale must comply with prior to county approval of a subdivision. This typically includes dedication of right-of-way for public use, road paving, drainage improvements and fire protection standards.

County officials recognize that development has occurred in the county's history where the responsibilities of the developer were not met. These included draining improvements, road paving, adequate right-of-way for the public to use for emergency and daily use. It is in consideration of locations where those conditions exist that the County is stating its interest in assisting with the installation of public improvements to bring them up to minimum county standards, subject to adopted County policies stated herein. Any action by the County Commissioners Court does not affect the adopted county's subdivision regulations.

Roadway Construction: Example

1. If a subdivision exists without paved streets in accordance with the County's regulations, the County will consider assisting with road paving by providing "in kind" services as listed in 1.h. subject to the following requirements:
 - a. That not less than 90% of the landowners directly abutting the proposed roadway project and not less than 75% of non-adjacent landowners to receive a benefit from the proposed roadway project shall sign a petition and deliver to the County requesting the improvements. All signatures shall be notarized.

Evidence of ownership shall be from HCAD records unless otherwise approved by the County. A deed may be requested by the County if necessary.

- b. Said request for County assistance shall require the petitioners to designate a single lead person to manage all processes involving the County and the petitioners.
- c. The petitioners must collectively pay 100% of the estimated construction cost to the County prior to the start of construction including all associated engineering fees and signed/sealed construction drawings.
- d. Payment to the county shall be completed with one check made payable to the County.
- e. Improvements shall be publicly bid in accordance with the County's standard practice.
- f. Improvements shall be constructed in accordance with the plans and specifications for the project.
- g. County commitment to participate is dependent upon the County's financial ability to assist including the timing of construction.
- h. County Assistance. The County will serve as the general contractor. All associated expenses by the County will be considered as "in kind" services and may include labor, equipment and materials. The County may choose to waive inspection fees at its option.
- i. The County may consider other types of improvements based on similar scenarios including but not limited to drainage projects.