



## MEMORANDUM

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TO: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council  
c/o Natawna Austin, *Executive Secretary*

FROM: Paul T. Graziano, *Commissioner*

DATE: June 27, 2014

RE: **City Council Bill 14-0385 - Urban Renewal – Johnston Square – Amendment**

The Department of Housing and Community Development has reviewed City Council Bill 14-0385, for the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan (URP) for Johnston Square to reauthorize the acquisition of properties within the Project Area, to remove certain properties from the lists in Appendices A and B, and to extend the life of the Plan; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; and providing for a special effective date.

In July of 2007, an amendment to the Maryland Code was made that requires the State or any of its instrumentalities or political subdivisions to file condemnation cases within four years of the authorization for acquisition and, if that cannot be accomplished, to renew the authorization to condemn.

If this bill is enacted, it would extend the City's acquisition authority, by condemnation or other legal means, the properties enumerated in the plans until December 31, 2018, remove properties from the URP that have been acquired and disposed of according to the plan and extend the life of the plan.

The renewal of the authority to acquire properties listed in the URP is necessary to protect the defined plan areas from blighting influences. The use of condemnation to acquire plan-identified properties allows the City to address concentrations of blight and to facilitate rehabilitation and reinvestment in accordance with the plans.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the passage of City Council Bill 14-0385.

PTG:sd

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*  
Mr. Colin Tarbert, *Deputy Mayor*