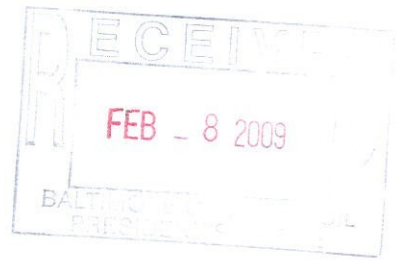




BALTIMORE
HOUSING

SHEILA DIXON
Mayor
PAUL T. GRAZIANO
Executive Director, HABC
Commissioner, HCDD



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, Executive Secretary

From: Paul T. Graziano, Commissioner

Date: February 9, 2009

Re: **City Council Bill 09-0272 Baltimore City Sustainability Plan**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 09-0272, which was introduced for the purpose of establishing a Sustainability Plan for the City of Baltimore.

The proposed legislation creates a Sustainability Plan that incorporates several critical elements of sustainability such air and water quality, energy and resource conservation, public health, environmental justice, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and the encouragement of alternative types of transportation. The Plan creates specific targets that are organized under seven core themes: cleanliness, pollution prevention, resource conservation, greening, transportation, education and awareness, and a green economy.

The portion of the Plan that is most relevant to DHCD falls under the section entitled "Cleanliness". Goal #3 under this section outline the requires strategies:

- A. Strengthening enforcement of dumping and litter laws
- B. Increase participation in community maintenance and stewardship efforts
- C. Create and sustain a land trust to support community-managed open space
- D. Return abandoned properties to productive use
- E. Establish a new fee schedule charged to absent property owners

In furtherance of these goals, Mayor Dixon has sponsored legislation, City Council Bill #09-0261, currently pending before the City Council that would create a Land Bank Authority. The Land Bank will focus resources on its primary mission to return abandoned property to productive use in an efficient manner. Additionally, Council Bill #09-0261 has a specific provision that would allow the Land Bank to serve as conservator of community managed neighborhood gardens and green space.

DHCD also is finalizing new legislation that will expand our authority to issue citations both for illegal dumping and to property owners of vacant buildings. These citations will permit our inspectors to penalize delinquent owners immediately by issuing a citation without the time delay of filing a case in

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Housing Court and waiting for a hearing date. Furthermore, the citations will allow a rapid accumulation of fines in order to compel a recipient to abate violations. We believe that this approach executes the strategy outlined in the Sustainability Plan.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the adoption of City Council Bill 09-0272.

PTG:pmd

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson
Mr. Andrew Frank
Ms. Diane Hutchins