



CITY OF BALTIMORE  
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

<b>TO</b>	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
<b>FROM</b>	Timothy Keane, Acting Commissioner, Housing and Community Development
<b>CC</b>	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
<b>DATE</b>	May 11, 2026
<b>SUBJECT</b>	26-0161 - Natural Resources - Forest and Tree Conservation - Conforming Amendments

**Position: Favorable**

**BILL SYNOPSIS**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 26-0161 Natural Resources – Forest and Tree Conservation – Conforming Amendments for the purpose of amending the Forest and Tree Conservation provisions of Article 7 of the Baltimore City Code to comply with new State requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

If enacted, City Council Bill 26-0161 would integrate into Baltimore City code the changes that State legislators have made to the Forest Conservation Act in recent years. If approved, this Bill will take effect on the date of its enactment.

**SUMMARY OF POSITION**

At its regular meeting of April 23, 2026, the Planning Commission concurred with the recommendations of its Departmental staff and recommended that the Bill be amended and approved by the City Council. In their report, the Commission noted that many of the proposed changes introduced by this Bill would be in direct alignment with the 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Baltimore. Examples of that alignment included the goals of maintaining Baltimore's existing tree canopy and increasing the canopy in neighborhoods experiencing frequent instances of extreme heat.

DHCD does not foresee this Bill significantly impacting agency operations pertaining to permit review or enforcement. Our Code Enforcement Building Inspectors and Code Enforcement Legal Section attorneys currently work as partners with the Department of Planning whenever a potential forestation violation arises and look forward to continuing that relationship as it

pertains to the implementation of the new provisions. Should this Bill be enacted, we will ensure that all relevant staff are appropriately trained on the updates to the existing forest conservation law.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

As drafted, this Bill would have minimal fiscal or administrative impact on DHCD.

### **AMENDMENTS**

DHCD does not seek any amendments to this Bill at this time.