



FROM	NAME & TITLE	Honorable Bill Henry, Comptroller 	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall		
	SUBJECT	21-0042 Real Estate Records – Modernization		

DATE:

TO

The Honorable President and
 Members of the City Council
 City Hall, Room 400

April 26, 2021

Position: Support

The Comptroller’s Office is reporting on 21-0042 Real Estate Records – Modernization. The purpose of this bill is to repeal a provision stating the Comptroller’s office has to maintain a well-bound book of real property records and replacing it with a database; and to repeal a provision mandating a public inspection process and replacing it with a public online posting. The effective date is 6 months after enactment.

Background

This legislation was introduced by the City Council President at the request of the Comptroller, in an effort to update some outdated parts of City Code.

The Department of Real Estate (DoRE) is a subordinate unit of the Comptroller’s Office. Per the Baltimore City Charter, DoRE is responsible for the acquisition, disposition, leasing, and inventory of City property. City code mandates the process for how the inventory records should be maintained – providing for a well-bound book listing deeds, leases, City real estate contracts, etc.

The practice of using a book for document storage is outmoded and impractical. Instead, DoRE has maintained relevant documents on an internal hard drive or as paper hard copies. DoRE works with the Department of Finance and Baltimore City Information Technology (BCIT) to manage the “real property file” on the City’s server, which lists the real property details.

The Department of Real Estate looks forward to collaborating with the Baltimore City Archives to properly retain and archive files online in accessible digital formats.

Conclusion

This legislation will give the Department of Real Estate flexibility in maintaining extensive real estate inventory records. The Comptroller’s Office supports DoRE’s the modernization and accessibility of City real estate operations, transactions and record keeping.

For the reasons stated above, the Comptroller’s Office supports the bill.