



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner
DATE	September 10, 2024
SUBJECT	24-0544 Zoning - Harford Road Overlay District

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

9/10/24

Theo Ngongang Ouandji

Position: Favorable

Introduction

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 24-0544 Zoning - Harford Road Overlay District for the purpose of establishing the Harford Road Overlay District; delineating the boundaries of the district; creating applicable use regulations within the district; establishing bulk and yard regulations within the district; detailing other applicable standards within the district; amending certain off-street parking requirements; and generally relating to the establishment of the Harford Road Overlay District.

If enacted, City Council Bill 24-0544 would establish the Harford Road Overlay District by delineating the boundaries of the district, creating applicable use regulations within the district, establishing bulk and yard regulations within the district, detailing other applicable standards within the district, and amending certain off-street parking requirements.

DHCD Analysis

At its regular meeting of August 1, 2024, the Planning Commission concurred with its Departmental staff and recommended that the Bill be amended and approved by the City Council. In their report, the Commission found that establishing the Harford Road Overlay District was in line with many of the goals and objectives of existing local plans and could make areas within the district more livable and sustainable by increasing density along Harford Road, improving the pedestrian experience, reducing auto-oriented uses, promoting sustainable mixed-use development, and increasing housing opportunity and diversity.

The amendments suggested by the Commission pertained to bulk and yard regulations, the Bill's suggested prohibition of curb cuts on Harford Road, and making Places of Worship a permitted use in C-1, C-2 and C-3, as opposed to Conditional by Board.

DHCD supports all of Planning's recommended amendments but particularly, deleting the stipulation that would prohibit new curb cuts for vehicles and driveways. A potential multi-family development along Harford Road may require a curb cut to attract and provide parking for new residents. It is also worth noting that this Bill changes a number of the uses in Table 12-1403 from Permitted (P) to Conditional by Board (CB) this change could produce a slightly larger workload for staff in Zoning Administration and Zoning Enforcement. The Overlay District will create an additional layer of examination for staff reviewing applications in the specified district.

DHCD supports this Bill's intent of bringing greater density to the Harford Road Corridor while also maintaining the character of that community. The proposed Overlay District does not fall within any of DHCD's Impact Investment Areas or Community Development Zones but does fall within a Streamlined Code Enforcement Area. DHCD does not anticipate a significant operational or fiscal impact from the passage of this Bill and the creation of this Overlay District may help increase affordable housing opportunities within the affected area and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Conclusion

DHCD respectfully requests a **favorable** report on City Council Bill 24-0544.