



DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP OF BALTIMORE, INC.

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January 15, 2013

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 N. Holiday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: City Council Bill #12-0098 – Inner Harbor Project I Urban Renewal Plan Amendment

Dear President Young and Members of the Council:

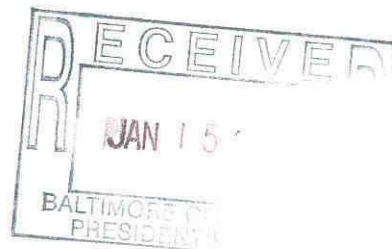
On behalf of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, I am writing in support of City Council Bill #12-0098, which amends the existing Inner Harbor Project I Urban Renewal Plan to allow for the disposition of certain parcels along Pratt Street for commercial uses. This change in the Urban Renewal Plan will allow for additional retail uses along Pratt Street, and is an integral part of the Pratt Street Plan and a critical element for the vitality of Pratt Street.

The Pratt Street Plan envisions an urban greenway, active with people, restaurants, shops, and culture. The Plan also advocates for Pratt Street as a key retail destination. At present, Pratt Street is unique in offering pedestrian right of way spanning up to 90 feet; however, poor sightlines and outdated public space design has actually created dead space that detracts from street vibrancy and pedestrian linkages. The Pratt Street plan suggests that a portion of this existing sidewalk instead be used for infill retail and/or outdoor dining. Not only does this scheme eliminate the problem of dead or underutilized public land, it adds a dimension of engagement and vibrancy to the pedestrian experience, and has the potential to put a portion of desirable real estate back on the City's tax rolls.

The amendment to the Inner Harbor Project I Urban Renewal Plan proposed in CB #12-0098 would make possible the vibrant street experience and retail destination envisioned above, and is therefore a vital part of Pratt Street Plan implementation. We energetically support the goals and tenets of CB #12-0098, and urge the City Council to pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Nan Rohrer
Vice President, Economic Development and Planning



CC: Hon. William Cole, Baltimore City Council
Ms. Brenda McKenzie, Baltimore Development Corporation