


FROM	NAME & TITLE	David E. Scott, Director	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL 08-0063		

DATE: June 2, 2008

TO

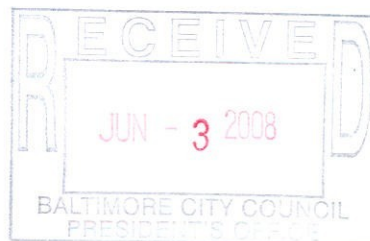
The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle
Room 400 - City Hall

I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 08-0063 introduced by Council Members Young, Cole, Kraft, Henry, Branch, Curran, Reisinger, Conaway, Middleton, Welch, D'Adamo, Holton, and Clarke.

The purpose of the Bill is to expressly restate and reaffirm the responsibilities of the City for the repair and maintenance of properties owned or operated by it; clarify certain definitions; require certain Departments to submit to the Mayor and the City Council a schedule for bringing all City-owned or –operated properties “to code” within a certain period and to provide periodic progress reports; provide for a special effective date; and generally relating to the scope and applicability of the Buildings, Fire, and Related Codes of Baltimore City.

City Council Bill 08-0063, if approved, would clarify that buildings owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore are subject to the requirements of the Building, Fire, and Related Codes. The Bill further states that, on or before the 90th day after the enactment of the Ordinance, the Departments of Public Works, Housing and Community Development, and Transportation are to jointly submit a schedule to bring all City-owned or operated properties “to code” (with emphasis on the Property Maintenance Code) within 36 months of the enactment, and to provide quarterly reports of progress in complying with the schedule.

City municipal buildings range in age from the historic to the fairly new, and each building is built to the requirements of the Building Code that exist at the time. This condition is true for any building, public or private, as the Codes are constantly being updated. The last major revisions to the Building, Fire, and Related Codes were adopted in 2007 (Ordinance 07-552). With the exception of safety issues that require immediate correction, City buildings are brought up to current Code requirements as significant renovation or capital projects occur. Under this legislation, all properties held by the City would be subject to current Code requirements, including the City’s inventory of vacant and abandoned structures. These buildings are in deplorable condition, the very reason why the City is the owner of last resort. These buildings are under the City’s care to clean and board for health and safety reasons, to hold for redevelopment or resale purposes, or to demolish. While this Department defers to the Department of Housing and Community Development on this aspect of the Bill, the



Carroll

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
June 2, 2008
Page 2

expenditures necessary to comply with the legislation are expected to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars, and would require investments in some structures that may eventually be torn down.

In Mayor Dixon's State of the City address to the Council she emphasized the City would lead by example by sprucing up building exteriors with landscaping, fencing, and painting various facilities, and keeping them proactively clean; a commitment all agencies, including Public Works, has taken to heart. As to a long term strategy, the City (through the Bureau of General Services) will be developing a Building Management System. This system will include a Facilities Management Survey that will catalog City-owned facilities and list building details such as the age of the building, square footage, type of construction, utilities serving the building, type and condition of HVAC and electrical systems, and the condition of roofs and plumbing. In addition, the System will list the agencies housed in the buildings and any tenants leasing space. The condition and physical plants of City buildings will be evaluated, as will space allocations and opportunities for more efficient use of space. Costs will be calculated for upgrading the buildings and a priority rating system used to develop annual Capital Improvement Program requests. Due to the enormity of the project, the system will be developed in phases. The first phase will include the major downtown municipal buildings, funding for which is included in the FY 2009 budget.

Based on these findings, the Department of Public Works must respectfully oppose City Council Bill 08-0063. However, implementing the Building Management System will address the concerns embodied in this legislation and will provide the City with a sound and prudent means to determine the best use and investment of limited capital resources in its facilities.


DAVID E. SCOTT
DIRECTOR

DES/MMC:pat

