

June 24th, 2025

Baltimore City Council
Transportation and Land Use Committee
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: CB 25-0053 Rezoning – 4001 East Baltimore Street

Dear Chairman Dorsey and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the proposed rezoning of 4001 East Baltimore Street to IMU-1. I don't want to duplicate any of the arguments put forward in the Planning staff report or the submission by the applicant, but wanted to testify to point out one element neither mentioned which I feel applies to the standards under §5-508(b), namely the impending development of the Southeast Segments of the Baltimore Greenway Trail. 4001 E Baltimore is located just across Haven Street - about 500 feet away - from a likely trail access point, along the reused complex hosting Monument City Brewing and Urban Axes.

The Baltimore Greenway Trail Coalition was formed in 2016, and while TransForm was passed late in the same year, preliminary versions of the code went back to 2012, with the last major round of revisions seeming to have been made in late 2015. It seems unlikely, then, that the planners at that time could have anticipated the potential development trends that such a substantial investment almost certainly will have on the entire corridor. Several years after the 2016 code revision, the 2020 report *Economic and social benefits of completing the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network* provided estimates on the potential economic impacts of the trail that were unavailable to TransForm planners, most relevant here being the expected 4-7% increase in value of parcels within a quarter mile of the trail, and a system-wide increase in local business spending of \$84-113 million.¹ Since TransForm, we have also gained the illustrative example of the more mature Atlanta Beltline, which as of last year has led to \$9 billion in induced private development investment along its comparable rail trail project.² This is a dual-edged sword, since rising property values, while good for City finances, could cause displacement of vulnerable renters if additional housing infill, like is proposed here, is not able to accommodate the increased desirability of the trail corridor.

Just as the City has zoned parcels TOD ahead of planned transit alignments, it would be a responsible, forward-looking move to support a more flexible and denser use of this and similar formerly industrial parcels along the Haven corridor in advance of the trail's construction.

Sincerely,
Ian Wolfe
District 1 (Greektown)

¹ Rep. *Economic and Social Benefits of Completing the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network*. Greater Washington Partnership, October 2020.
https://greaterwashingtonpartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Baltimore-Greenway-Report_Final_Digital.pdf.

² Rep. *2024 Annual Report*. Atlanta Beltline, Inc., March 27, 2025.
<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/9b1aa20af4.html>.