

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 22-0092R
(First Reader)

Introduced by: Councilmembers McCray, Ramos, Middleton, Bullock

Introduced and read first time: February 22, 2022

Assigned to: Committee of the Whole

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, Planning Department, Department of Housing and Community Development, City Administrator

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – Addressing Vacant Housing through**
3 **General Obligation Bonds**

4 FOR the purpose of requesting the City Administrator, the Deputy Mayor for Community and
5 Economic Development, the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community
6 Development, the Director of the Department of Finance, the City Solicitor, and the Director
7 of the Department of Planning to appear before the Baltimore City Council to discuss the
8 ways that loans through the Community and Economic Development Fund have helped to
9 eliminate blight through vacant home demolition, provide an overview of projects that are
10 currently being developed to resolve the vacant home problem in the City, and assess
11 available funding sources that can be used to end the problem of vacant homes in Baltimore
12 City.

13 **Recitals**

14 There are 15,032 vacant homes in Baltimore City and less than 2,000 of these properties are
15 City-owned. Across the City, vacant homes remain abandoned, derelict, and unoccupied.
16 Historically, the 3 major contributing factors to vacant buildings in Baltimore City have been job
17 and population loss, suburban growth, and segregation and discrimination.

18 Vacant buildings are the legacy of segregated housing and racial discrimination of the past,
19 the remnants of policies such as redlining in the 1930's and blockbusting in the 1950's and
20 1960's. Many of Baltimore's vacant buildings are located in historically segregated African-
21 American neighborhoods in east and west Baltimore. According to data from the Baltimore
22 Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, 8% of residential properties are vacant and abandoned in
23 Baltimore City as a whole. Despite this City-wide figure, 15% of residential properties in
24 African-American communities are vacant and abandoned, showing that past racist policies still
25 have an impact on the City today.

26 Every 2 years, Baltimore City citizens vote on ballot referendums to issue general obligation
27 bonds. Through this process, funds like the Community and Economic Development Fund can
28 be created to allocate resources to eliminate blight. Monies are used to support efforts like
29 strategic whole-block demolition, finance and provide incentives to private investors, and
30 improve the appearance of commercial and industrial areas.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

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1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
2 Baltimore City Council requests that the City Administrator, the Deputy Mayor for Community
3 and Economic Development, the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community
4 Development, the Director of the Department of Finance, the City Solicitor, and the Director of
5 the Department of Planning appear before the City Council to discuss the ways that loans through
6 the Community and Economic Development Fund have helped to eliminate blight through vacant
7 home demolition, provide an overview of projects that are currently being developed to resolve
8 the vacant home problem in the City, and explore available funding sources that can be used to
9 end the problem of vacant homes in Baltimore City.

10 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the City
11 Administrator, the Deputy Mayor for Community and Economic Development, the
12 Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the
13 Department of Finance, the City Solicitor, the Director of the Department of Planning, and the
14 Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.