



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner

Date: February 13, 2024

Re: City Council Bill 23-0448 Urban Renewal - Inner Harbor Project I - Amendment 21

Introduction

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 23-0448 for the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan for Inner Harbor Project I; amending the Development Area Controls for certain development areas; amending the Land Use and Proposed Zoning exhibits to the Plan; waiving certain content and procedural requirements, making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; providing the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; and providing for a special effective date.

If enacted, this bill would make a variety of changes to the Urban Renewal Plan (URP) for the Inner Harbor by modifying Land Disposition, Size of Facilities, Services, Development Area 13 (North Harborplace Pavilion), Development Area 14 (McKeldin Plaza), and Development Area 15a (South Harborplace Pavilion).

DHCD Analysis

At its regular meeting of December 21st, 2023, the Planning Commission concurred with the recommendation of its Departmental staff and recommended the Bill be amended and approved by the City Council. Planning staff recommended exploring the creation of a Waterfront Overlay for the Inner Harbor based on other Waterfront Overlay areas within the city. This could allow for the eventual elimination of the C-5-IH zoning category as well as the repeal of the URP.

The modifications proposed in this Bill would update the Development Area Controls for certain development areas and amend the Land Use and Proposed Zoning Exhibits to reflect changes to the Plan to enable the development supported by companion Bills 23-0444 and 23-0446 to accommodate a wider range of uses. The changes to the URP may help to address the housing shortage, that exists both in Baltimore and State-wide, by providing additional residential housing options that would complement the existing recreational and commercial uses around the harbor by adding population density that could support the area's commercial tenants. The changes may improve the pedestrian environment and allow for new construction that is compatible with existing development.

The subject property is not located within any of DHCD's Impact Investment Areas, Community Development Zones, or Streamlined Code Enforcement Areas. The Bill does not have an operational or fiscal impact on DHCD and the proposed changes to the URP would not endanger public health, safety or welfare.

Conclusion

DHCD respectfully requests a **favorable** report on City Council Bill 23-0448.

AK/sm

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office of Government Relations