



MEMORANDUM

STEPHANIE
RAWLINGS-BLAKE,
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO,
Executive Director, HABC
Commissioner, HCD

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, *Executive Secretary*

From: Paul T. Graziano, *Commissioner*

Date: September 23, 2011

Re: **City Council Bill 11-0383R - Investigative Hearing - Maintenance of City Owned Properties**

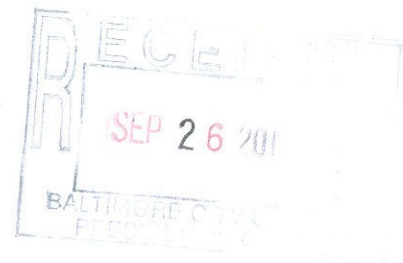
The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reviewed City Council Resolution 11-0383, which was introduced for the purpose of calling on representatives from the Departments of Public Works, Health, Housing, Recreation & Parks, and General Services to appear before the City Council to explain the City's current policies for maintaining City owned vacant lots and other properties; discuss how these properties could be better maintained; and establish a clear and simple method by which neighbors of City owned properties can quickly and effectively get their concerns addressed.

HCD supports the City Council's investigative hearing into the important responsibilities HCD owes to minimize the impact of properties owned by the City. HCD is continuously reviewing its myriad approaches to the services it delivers to the citizens of Baltimore, such as code enforcement, disposition of city-owned properties and its commitment to green, healthy and sustainable homes, to name but a few, and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each strategy. One example is HCD's Vacants to Value program whose purpose is to move the publicly owned property into the hands and responsibility of private ownership, and therefore, out of the responsibility of the city to pay for maintenance in these tough economic times. A more recent innovative example of HCD's commitment to approaches that maximize effectiveness—that is to say, do more with less—is the recent change we have made to disposition rules surrounding city-owned vacant side yard properties.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the adoption of City Council Resolution 11-0383R and looks forward to working with the City Council to address its concerns.

PTG:nb

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*
Ms. Kaliope Parthemous, *Deputy Mayor*



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