



## MEMORANDUM

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

From: Alice Kennedy, Acting Housing Commissioner

Date: October 27, 2021

**Re: City Council Resolution 21-0070R Informational Hearing - Soil Conservation in Baltimore City**

### Background on 21-0070R

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Resolution 21-0070R for the purpose of inviting representatives from the Department of Planning, Department of Public Works, Department of Recreation and Parks, Office of Sustainability, Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Control Board to address their current roles in soil conservation and urban agriculture and servicing Baltimore City's farmers.

City Council Resolution 21-0070R calls on the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) along with various agencies, to participate in an informational hearing on their current roles in soil conservation and urban agriculture and servicing Baltimore City's farmers. DHCD supports the intent of this Resolution but does not play a direct role in soil conservation. Article 7 of the Baltimore City Code commits the Department of Public Works to establish concept plans to combat soil erosion and employ sediment control.

### DHCD's Role in Soil Conservation in Baltimore City

For the purpose of this informational hearing, DHCD will describe our agency's role in servicing Baltimore City's gardeners that are a part of the agency's Adopt-a-Lot program. While the program is not currently constructed to support urban farms, it adds significant value to the health and welfare of our communities by creating a greener future.

The agency's Vacants to Value Office of Marketing and Community Outreach manages the Adopt-A-Lot program. Residents, businesses or neighborhood groups can apply for site control to steward city-owned vacant lots in their community. An Adopt-A-Lot license holder can create community spaces that include: community gardens, clean and green spaces, and recreational areas. The maintenance of the adopted lots is the responsibility of the entity that enters into the Adopt-A-Lot agreement. An interactive map of vacant lots that are available for adoption, lots



that are currently adopted and community managed open spaces can be found on DHCD's [website](#)

DHCD relies on these partnerships not only to reduce the burden on the City to maintain vacant lots but also to improve living conditions and food security in our neighborhoods. Increased opportunities for urban agriculture could play a significant role in attracting new residents, businesses, and raising property values.

The Department of Housing and Community Development **supports** City Council Resolution 21-0070R.

AK/sm

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

**Brandon M. Scott**, Mayor • **Alice Kennedy**, Acting Housing Commissioner  
417 East Fayette Street • Baltimore, MD 21202 • 443-984-5757 • [dhcd.baltimorecity.gov](http://dhcd.baltimorecity.gov)