




CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner 
DATE	November 7, 2024
SUBJECT	24-0576 Historic Preservation - Conservation Districts - Establishment

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400

11/7/2024

Position: Favorable

Introduction

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 24-0576 Historic Preservation - Conservation Districts - Establishment for the purpose of establishing Conservation Districts; providing a study, proposal, and review process; defining certain terms; and providing for a special effective date.

If enacted, City Council Bill 24-0576 would establish both Conservation Districts and the processes needed for their management. If approved, this Bill would come into effect on the 30th day after its enactment.

DHCD Analysis

At its regular meeting of September 12, 2024, the Planning Commission concurred with the recommendations of its Departmental staff and recommended that the Bill be approved by the City Council. The Commission noted in their report that the proposal to create Conservation Districts was in response to many community associations expressing interest in a historic designation that was less stringent in design review requirements than that of a local historic district. The Commission also noted that the establishment of Conservation Districts is a recommendation mentioned within their current Comprehensive Master Plan and that such districts may function as a more efficient and effective way to achieve the goals of many active Urban Renewal Plans.

DHCD supports the intent of this legislation and believes that the retention and upkeep of buildings given special designations for their historical or architectural significance benefits the health and stability of our neighborhoods throughout the City. The creation of Conservation Districts could offer a new flexible means to further achieve this end. DHCD does not anticipate an operational or fiscal impact from the passage of this Bill and as this legislation is applicable to the entire City, Conservation Districts may arise within our Impact Investment Areas, Community Development Zones, or Streamlined Code Enforcement Areas.

Conclusion

DHCD respectfully requests a **favorable** report on City Council Bill 24-0576.