

Baltimore City Council



Housing & Economic Development Committee

25-0019

**Midtown Community Benefits District &
Management Authority – Establishment**

Public Testimony



Re: Midtown Community Benefits District

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:17 PM

To Helen Hofling <helenhofling@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Helen Hofling <helenhofling@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:49 AM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>

Subject: Midtown Community Benefits District

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose.

The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our

community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been “problems” have for decades been skirting the City’s trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,

Helen Hofling



Re: Improving Midtown Benefits

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:15 PM

To Jane Polanka <jane.polanka@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Jack Danna <jackanthonydanna@gmail.com>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Jane Polanka <jane.polanka@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 10:29 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Jack Danna <jackanthonydanna@gmail.com>

Subject: Improving Midtown Benefits

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am a longtime resident of Mt. Vernon and have questions about the Midtown Community Benefits District's performance. Its core mission is to keep our communities Clean and Safe, yet trash is a major issue and I cannot remember the last time I saw a safety patrol. I avoid being alone outside after dark. I have reviewed Midtown's nice website, but would feel better if there was reinforcement in its efforts so that the community felt safer and looked cleaner.

As the Council considers the renewal of Midtown's contract, we ask that you directly communicate to Midtown staff your expectations about its core mission and performance. Perhaps there should be sanctions in place until they can demonstrate a renewed commitment to Clean (though I want to thank Curtis who has been helpful dealing with chronic trash and dumping on Brexton Street when I contact him and send a photo) and Safe (its Green mission appears to be doing well) in Mt. Vernon and our other communities.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important effort.

Sincerely,

Jane Polanka



Re: Midtown Benefits District not doing its job

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:15 PM

To George Bourozikas <george@bourozikas.net>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: George Bourozikas <george@bourozikas.net>

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 11:17 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>

Subject: Midtown Benefits District not doing its job

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Dear Council President Cohen,

I have been a resident of Mt Vernon and have for the past thirteen years and paid the Midtown Benefits Tax. Throughout this period the services that Midtown should provide as part of its mission to make the district "clean, green and safe" have deteriorated to such an extent that we, as residents, need your help to refocus the organization.

Midtown used to employ street cleaners who were conscientious, friendly, and efficient. We knew them personally, they were part of the community, and kept our streets clean. This task has since been outsourced and the sorry state of our streets shows the results. Midtown is also lax at forcing serial trash offenders to comply with city standards.

Midtown used to be active in planting and maintaining trees - this has deteriorated in the past few years as well.

Safety is not a major issue in this neighborhood but this is due to the overall reduction in crime in our city. This is something to cherish and be proud of. Midtown has done nothing on this front.

We urge you to take a close look at Midtown's structure and leadership. Perhaps the leadership needs to be replaced. Now that their contract is under review, we ask that you hold them accountable by incorporating meaningful metrics and demanding change.

Many of us are upset enough that we are considering putting our tax surcharge in an escrow account until Midtown starts to fulfill its mission.

Thank you for your interest in this. Please feel free to contact me for more details and any clarification.

Best regards,
George Bourozikas
719 Park Ave., Baltimore, MD 21201
(917) 862 0287



Re: Midtown Community Benefits District

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:15 PM

To Megan Isenock <maigan3@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7
100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Megan Isenock <maigan3@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 9:44 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Subject: Midtown Community Benefits District

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose.

With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been “problems” have for decades been skirting the City’s trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community.

Two of our biggest concerns currently are the fines we’ve accrued from negligent landlords turning a blind eye to their residents dumping large amounts of trash in our tree well, as well as the confounding crow invasion which had led to unhealthy amounts of crow feces covering the neighborhood.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,

Megan Isenock and Rob Tate



Re: Issues with Midtown

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:13 PM

To Dr. Lyle S. Nash <lylenash@yahoo.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

 1 attachment (19 KB)

Letter concerning Midtown Lyle Nash.docx;

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Dr. Lyle S. Nash <lylenash@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 1:57 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>

Subject: Issues with Midtown

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the decline in the quality of service of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. They are not meeting their core mission objectives of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". They have subbed their key services to a third-party provider and there seems to be little oversight. The further you get from Charles Street the more likely you are to find the same trash littering the streets for days and

weeks at a time. This should not happen anywhere in the city, but considering we all pay an additional tax, it is particularly unacceptable in Midtown.

The central goals of “clean, green, and safe” were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. There are many “problem” properties that have been skirting the City’s trash requirements for decades—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these absentee landlords in or at least proactively planning to pick up the piles of trash they strew around the neighborhood, and all the work has been left to the residents of the community. Midtown is missing in action and failing to meet its most basic responsibilities.

Furthermore, we are facing new threats that need to be addressed, such as the massive crow infestation in Mount Vernon. While no expects Midtown to rid Mount Vernon of crows, they could show initiative and deal with the hygiene issues related to guano[1] hotspots. They should have clean-up crews with the proper protective clothing cleaning sidewalks and common areas in Midtown. Midtown has failed to meet their basic obligations and seem not understood how their mission has evolved to meet new threat to public hygiene.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. I am asking you to tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or, if they are unable or unwilling to do so, to ask for new leadership, or least enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,
Lyle Nash

[1] Bird guano represents a serious health hazard.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7602749/#:~:text=Several%20bacterial%20and%20viral%20infections,4%2C5%2C6%5D>.



Re: Midtown Community Benefits District

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:13 PM

To Darren <djmcmgregor1@aol.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Darren <djmcmgregor1@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 1:05 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>

Subject: Midtown Community Benefits District

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to join my neighbors in our concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose.

The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this

community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been “problems” have for decades been skirting the City’s trash requirements thus contributing to trash laden streets and increasing the rat problem — many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community. We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,

Darren J. McGregor

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 10:46 AM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Brandon M Scott <brandonm.scott@baltimorecity.gov>

Subject:

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Dear City Council President Cohen and City Council Members,

I write to request that you take action to ensure a course correction for the Midtown Community Benefits District. A few years ago, my husband and I returned to my home state of Maryland after a decade in New England and, after many years of suburban living, we were thrilled to return to city living. We chose Mt. Vernon, where we purchased and restored a rather dilapidated historic townhouse on Park Avenue. We invested substantially in this property and were excited to become part of this community. Part of the draw for us was that we had been assured that the Midtown Community Benefits District (“MCBD” or “the District”) was actively engaged in keeping Midtown “clean, green, and safe,” and since our arrival we have contributed significant tax dollars that are intended to support this mission. We are disappointed and disgusted to find that the MCBD is failing spectacularly to accomplish its mission. Midtown is covered in trash, dog waste and graffiti. This architecturally beautiful and fascinating part of the city is being allowed to become a pigsty. I am told, in fact, that some of these properties and landlords have been problematic for *decades*; certainly this blatant disregard for city laws and regulations has been an ongoing problem since we purchased our property three years ago. There are so many things we love about Baltimore and, specifically, about our neighborhood, but the deteriorating living environment is frankly depressing.

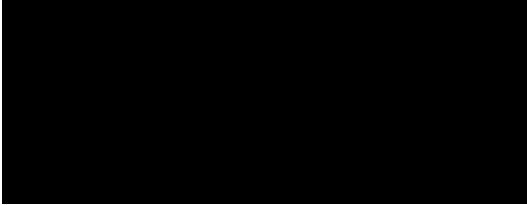
I recognize that some members of the Council may feel that Baltimore has bigger and more urgent problems than the decay of Midtown. However, Baltimore cannot build the wealth we require to address the stubborn and difficult problems that are statistically associated with poverty if our middle class neighborhoods are unattractive places to own homes.

For these reasons, I join my neighbors in urging you to ensure that the MCBD refocuses on its core mission of clean, green, and safe. This needs to be addressed as an “all hands on deck” situation at the District. At a minimum, it is essential that other projects and programs be paused until the District

has accomplished these objectives: (1) eliminating un-binned trash and dog poop from our streets and alleys and taking enforcement action against violators and (2) remediating graffiti as soon as it appears and taking action to deter further vandalism. To the degree that the contract with the MCBBD provides the Council with inadequate leverage to ensure that District shows meaningful progress on its fundamental responsibilities, it is essential that such provisions be inserted when the Contract is renewed. I'm aware that neighbors have suggested that you take action to replace the MCBBD's senior leadership and or escrow tax proceeds until there is evidence of their refocus. These seem to me to be sound suggestions, but I believe the Council likely also has additional tools at its disposal as well and I urge you to use your collective creativity and skills to solve this problem.

Respectfully,

<Signature.JPG>





Re: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Sat 2/15/2025 1:44 PM

To Whitney Birenbaum <whitney.ward@gmail.com>

Cc Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Erics@midtowncommunity.org <Erics@midtowncommunity.org>; nscohen83@gmail.com <nscohen83@gmail.com>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>

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Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Whitney Birenbaum <whitney.ward@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:32 PM

To: Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Erics@midtowncommunity.org <Erics@midtowncommunity.org>; nscohen83@gmail.com <nscohen83@gmail.com>

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

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Whitney Ward Birenbaum

304 West Lafayette Ave

Baltimore, MD 21217

Whitney.ward@gmail.com

2-14-2025

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

As a resident who has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Whitney Ward Birenbaum

304 West Lafayette Ave

Baltimore, MD 21217

Whitney.ward@gmail.com

919-616-0642



Re: Request for public testimony at Midtown Authorization Hearing February 18th 2025

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Sat 2/15/2025 1:48 PM

To Nicholas Cohen <nscohen83@gmail.com>

Cc Testimony <Testimony@baltimorecity.gov>; Chew, Hosea (City Council) <Hosea.Chew@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Eric Souza <Ericks@midtowncommunity.org>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

Thank you for your message. I confirm receipt, and Council Services staff will add your email to the bill file to ensure your comments are included in the public record.

James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Nicholas Cohen <nscohen83@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:19 PM

To: Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Testimony <Testimony@baltimorecity.gov>; Chew, Hosea (City Council) <Hosea.Chew@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Eric Souza <Ericks@midtowncommunity.org>

Subject: Request for public testimony at Midtown Authorization Hearing February 18th 2025

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Dear Chairman Torrence,

If it pleases the Chair, I respectfully request that favorable oral testimony regarding the authorization bill for the Midtown Community Benefits District and Management Authority be heard and included in the record at the meeting on February 18, 2025.

Nicholas S. Cohen, Chairman of the Midtown Benefits District, and Eric Souza, President of Midtown Benefits, will provide testimony on this matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Nicholas S. Cohen
Chairman, Midtown Community Benefits District
Vice Chair, Madison Park Improvement Association

Leva, Anthony F (City Council)

From: Torrence, James (City Council)
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 4:16 PM
To: curtldecker@aol.com
Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office); Master, Maggie (City Council); Blanchard, Zachary (City Council); Jones, Jermaine (City Council); photini.sinnis@gmail.com; president@mvba.org; Paula Fernandes | GSSHealth; District 7 Staff; Leva, Anthony F (City Council); Mead, Nancy (City Council)
Subject: Re: Midtown Authorization - Heading in the Wrong Direction

Thank you for your message. I confirm receipt, and Council Services staff will add your email to the bill file to ensure your comments are included in the public record.

James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: curtldecker@aol.com <curtldecker@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 3:59 PM
To: Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>
Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; president@mvba.org <president@mvba.org>; Paula Fernandes | GSSHealth <pfernandes@gsshealth.com>
Subject: Midtown Authorization - Heading in the Wrong Direction

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Dear Chairman:

As a 50 year resident of Mount Vernon, I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction and leadership of the Midtown Community Benefits District. I also live in District 11.

Over the past few years, there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's enhanced services around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose.

The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been

“problems” have for decades been undermining the City’s trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in 1996. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community.

Equally important, I was told in the Fall of 2024 that Midtown had devised a plan to curtail its greening program and put the onus on the communities. Our greening program has always been a collaborative and cost sharing endeavor to build a greening and more walkable landscape in Mount Vernon and the other communities in Midtown. To pull back on such a core function underscores the poor leadership at Midtown one in which places the fundraising and implementation on the communities misguided.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—it should be their 100% priority.

I ask that you to consider these facts as you authorize Midtown to operate as a tax accepting authority. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact as my mobile number is below.
Respectfully,

Curtis Decker
8 West Read Street
21201
Cell 4102991055

Leva, Anthony F (City Council)

From: Torrence, James (City Council)
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 4:13 PM
To: Joseph Harrison; Cohen, Zeke (City Council)
Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office); Master, Maggie (City Council); Blanchard, Zachary (City Council); Jones, Jermaine (City Council); photini.sinnis@gmail.com; Kerri Jenkins-Harrison; District 7 Staff; Leva, Anthony F (City Council); Mead, Nancy (City Council)
Subject: Re: Concerns RE Midtown Community District Services

Thank you for your message. I confirm receipt, and Council Services staff will add your email to the bill file to ensure your comments are included in the public record.

James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Joseph Harrison <jaharrison2@icloud.com>

Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 4:00 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council)

<Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council)

<James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Kerri Jenkins-Harrison <kjenkinsharrison@me.com>

Subject: Concerns RE Midtown Community District Services

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are earmarked for this purpose.

The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been "problems" have for decades been skirting the City's trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,

Joseph Harrison
Kerri Jenkins-Harrison
830 Tyson Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Leva, Anthony F (City Council)

From: Torrence, James (City Council)
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 4:12 PM
To: Brenda Leadley; Cohen, Zeke (City Council)
Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office); Master, Maggie (City Council); Blanchard, Zachary (City Council); Jones, Jermaine (City Council); District 7 Staff; Mead, Nancy (City Council); Leva, Anthony F (City Council)
Subject: Re: Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Thank you for your message. I confirm receipt, and Council Services staff will add your email to the bill file to ensure your comments are included in the public record.

James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Brenda Leadley <bkleadley@yahoo.com>

Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 4:05 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council)

<Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones,

Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council)

<James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Subject: Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the continued direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District as you consider the upcoming authorization. Over the last two years, there has been a focus on expanding activities without full community support that in some ways diminishes Midtown's ability to perform its clean, green, and safe responsibilities which the community looks to them to accomplish with our additional tax dollars.

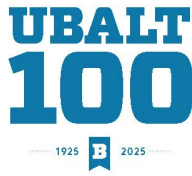
Those of us who have lived in Mount Vernon for some time have dealt with various changes over the years at Midtown, but our understanding has always been that their core mission was to make Mount Vernon, and the other communities, "clean, green, and safe." These goals were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan which was developed in 2000 after two years of consultation and input from all 4 neighborhoods- Mt. Vernon, Bolton Hill, Madison Park, and Charles North—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community.

You may be surprised to learn that Mount Vernon's median income is \$38,000, much lower than the city-wide's median income of \$50,000. These large, former mansions are largely chopped up into numerous apartments—many people live here—perhaps the largest population of the Midtown communities. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been "problems" have for decades been skirting the City's trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then perhaps other discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 443-554-8712.

Best regards, Brenda Leadley, 1006 N Calvert St

Sent from my iPad



David Bobart
University of Baltimore
1420 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

February 13, 2025

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

The University of Baltimore has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

David Bobart
Vice President for Administration and Technology
dbobart@ubalt.edu
410-837-4331



Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

Baltimore Unity Hall, Inc. has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Esposito'.

Ashley Esposito
Executive Director
Baltimore Unity Hall, Inc.
1505 Eutaw Place
Baltimore, MD 21217
ash@baltimoreunityhall.org
443-933-0700



February 14, 2025

Honorable James Torrence, City Council 7th District
Chairman of the Economic Development and Land Use Committee
Baltimore City Council
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Chairman and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

On behalf of the Charles North Community Association (CNCA), and my fellow Co-President of CNCA, Ms. Colleen Stanley, I am writing today to share our support of Baltimore City Council Bill 24-0531 for the purpose of renewing the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) and the Midtown Community Benefits Management Authority. MCBBD performs important and necessary functions within Charles North, the heart of the Station North Arts and Entertainment District. For nearly 30 years, MCBBD has kept our streets cleaner and our blocks greener.

We believe it is necessary for MCBBD to exist and it is essential to keep MCBBD running in order to keep the Station North district from falling into further blight. The district has had its challenges in recent years as local institutions such as MICA and the Parkway Theater have faced challenges. The MCBBD has been a strong partner, by having community tree plantings, and most recently partnering with Charles Street Development Corp. who engaged the Baltimore Sheriff's office in assigning patrols during evening hours to ensure our City's citizens can visit our neighborhood's restaurants, galleries and theaters while feeling safe and secure to do so, which is vital for our commercial residents. We are very appreciative of MCBBD's recent focus on public safety in Charles North and applaud loudly the recent work they have facilitated.

In spite of these successes, some residents and stakeholders in Charles North have voiced concerns that Midtown has placed too much emphasis on projects that have strayed away from the core mission of its founding, such as artistic placemaking and workforce development programs. These projects, while commendable, do not address the key problems in our community such as, rampant graffiti, a lack of public safety on North Ave., and general unsanitary street conditions throughout the community.

We absolutely need to have a re-authorized MCBBD, but also a refocused and re-energized MCBBD, ready to tackle the difficult problems our community faces when we need them most.

All the Best,

David Lapidés
cnca.pres@gmail.com
Co-President - Charles North Community Association

CC:
Zeke Cohen, City Council President
Faith Leach, Chief Administrative Officer at City of Baltimore
Zachary Blanchard, Council Member, District 11
Jermaine Jones, District 12 Council Member



James Torrence
100 Holliday Street
Room 545
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

February 14, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

Café Filí has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ziad Maalouf
Owner
Café Filí
zmaalouf@cafefili.com
202.294,8703

**T H E
T I L T E D
R O W**

James Torrence
100 Holliday Street
Room 545
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

February 14, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

The Tilted Row has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ziad Maalouf
Owner
The Tilted Row
zmaalouf@cafefili.com
202.294,8703

February 14, 2025

Honorable James Torrence, Chair, Housing and Economic Development Committee
Honorable members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee

Baltimore City Council
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been a cornerstone of Baltimore's Midtown neighborhoods, ensuring they remain clean, green, and vibrant. As a homeowner in Madison Park for eight years, a renter in Bolton Hill and Mt. Vernon for four years each, the Chair of the Midtown Benefits District, and someone who works at the Motor House in Charles North, I witness daily the critical role Midtown plays in supporting the well-being of our residents, businesses, and public spaces.

Midtown's effectiveness goes far beyond simple maintenance. The dedicated teams who care for our streets, green spaces, and public areas do more than pick up litter—they provide a visible presence that strengthens neighborhood pride, enhances safety, and contributes to economic vitality. The impact of these efforts is clear: well-maintained streets, thriving small businesses, and a community that continues to grow and attract investment. Midtown's commitment to equitable and meaningful service delivery ensures that all parts of the district receive attention and that resources are distributed to meet the needs of the diverse communities it serves.

Midtown has continuously evolved in response to the challenges and needs of the communities it serves. The organization remains firmly committed to its mission while adapting to ensure that resources are used effectively and strategically. This includes evaluating partnerships, service delivery, and operational efficiencies to maximize impact. The reality is that no single approach will fully solve the challenges of litter, safety, and public space maintenance overnight. It takes ongoing work, collaboration, and a willingness to meet changing needs head-on. Midtown has demonstrated its ability to do just that.

Beyond its direct services, Midtown strengthens our neighborhoods through engagement, advocacy, and support for cultural and economic development. These efforts are not distractions from its mission; they are essential to Midtown's long-term sustainability and vibrancy. Public spaces that are clean, safe, and well-maintained attract residents, visitors, and businesses—ensuring that Midtown remains a desirable place to live and work.

Now more than ever, reauthorizing MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces significant challenges, and Midtown's services are not just valuable but necessary. The idea that our neighborhoods could maintain the same quality of life without Midtown's continued presence and leadership is simply unrealistic.

I strongly urge you to support the authorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. Investing in Midtown is an investment in the strength, stability, and success of Baltimore's communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicholas S. Cohen

Chairman Midtown Benefits District

1423 Madison Ave, 21217



Memorial Apartments Corporation

Memorial Apartment Corporation
301 McMechen Street
Baltimore, MD. 21217
2/13/25

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

Memorial Apartment Corporation has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ashiah Parker, Board President
1505 Eutaw Place, Suite 101, Baltimore, MD. 21217
ashiah.parker@gmail.com
443.570.1480

301 McMechen Street
Baltimore MD, 21217

Phone: (410) 523-0113
Web: www.macbaltimore.org

301 McMechen Street
Baltimore MD, 21217



Phone: (410) 523-0113
Web: www.macbaltimore.org

Alexa Eckley
250 West Lanvale Street
Baltimore, MD 21217
2/13/2025

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

As a resident who has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Beyond maintenance, Midtown fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work. Without these services, our neighborhoods would suffer, potentially reducing property values and deterring economic growth.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexa Eckley
250 West Lanvale Street
Baltimore, MD 21217
2/13/2025

Erin Penniston, LMSW
218 Laurens Street, Baltimore, MD 21217

February 14, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to care for and work with communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

As a Bolton hill resident who not only lives but, plays, prays and works in 21217, MCBD is critical in helping me and my family every day, and I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety. Beyond maintenance, MCBD fosters a strong sense of community engagement through programs that bring neighbors together. Their support for local businesses, public spaces, and cultural institutions makes Midtown a desirable place to live and work.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore is at a pivotal point, and MCBD is an essential organization to help support Baltimore's renaissance. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents, businesses, and people who visit and work in these neighborhoods.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Erin Penniston
218 Laurens Street
Baltimore, MD 21217
peacefulesp@gmail.com
410-624-9252



February 14, 2025

Councilman James Torrence, Chair
Housing and Economic Development Committee
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Subject: Letter of Support for Midtown Community Benefits District Authorization

Dear Chairman James Torrence and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

For nearly three decades, the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) has been dedicated to keeping our neighborhoods clean, green, and vibrant while advocating for the needs of our residents and businesses. Midtown continues to work with its communities in Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park, and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to maintain a high quality of life. Midtown provides exceptional services to ensure our neighborhoods remain clean, green, safe, and vibrant.

Charles Street Development has directly benefited from the services provided by Midtown, I strongly support its authorization. Their dedicated teams keep our streets well-maintained, free of litter, landscaped, enhancing residents' quality of life and attracting businesses and visitors. The security and maintenance services they provide contribute to the overall sense of safety and pride in our community.

Now more than ever, the continued authorization of MCBD is essential. Baltimore faces numerous challenges, and ensuring well-maintained and secure neighborhoods is vital to the city's success. Midtown's services are indispensable, and their absence would negatively impact both residents and businesses.

I urge you to support the reauthorization of the Midtown Community Benefits District. This investment strengthens Baltimore and ensures our neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristin Speaker".

Kristin Speaker
Executive Director

cc: Councilman Zac Blanchard

Charles Street Development

100 N. Charles Street, 17th floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

kspeaker@charlesstreet.org
410.274.8830

charlesstreet.org
[@HistoricCharlesStreet](https://www.instagram.com/HistoricCharlesStreet)





MOUNT
VERNON
BELVEDERE
ASSOCIATION

February 14, 2025

Honorable James Torrence, City Council, 7th District
Chairman of the Housing and Economic Development Committee
Baltimore City Council
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Chairman:

On behalf of the Mount Vernon-Belvedere Association (MVBA), we are writing to share the association's support for the City of Baltimore Council Bill 95-613 for the purpose of renewing the Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD) and the Midtown Community Benefits Management Authority. Our support for the authorization of MCBD is predicated on a few conditions to be noted in the public record outlined in our testimony before the Housing and Economic Development Committee hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 18, 2025. These conditions are below:

1. MCBD must prioritize its core mission—clean, green, and safe enhanced services that are underwritten by the surcharge tax and that may require tightened legislation to ensure they are central to Midtown's mission;
2. MCBD's conduct an evaluation of its Block-by-Block contract to determine effectiveness; and,
3. MCBD leadership and its Board of Directors are responsive to the concerns of its constituent communities, as expressed in condition 1 above.

Over the last two years, we have heard from many constituents that MCBD has migrated from its core mission, underwritten by the surcharge, to provide high-quality enhanced services. The core, clean, green, and safe functions were identified through a thoughtful grass roots planning process that led up to the creation of MCBD in 1996. These enhanced services are as relevant today as they were in 1996—clean, green, and safe public spaces are central to fostering healthy and vibrant communities.

In 2000, MCBD published a Midtown Community Plan that was authored by Charlie Duff, with extensive input and participation from the four communities of Midtown. This plan was launched on the assumption that MCBD would continue to focus on its core mission of clean, green, and safe enhanced services. The Mount Vernon Master Plan of 2013 built on these understood goals. We urge clean, green, and safe enhanced services to be the key focus of Midtown's work and mission.

The need for MCBD's enhanced services is clear to anyone who walks or drives along one of the many alleys in Midtown. Trash and unattractive streets undermine our ability to attract investment and residents. It doesn't matter how many boots are on the ground if there is still trash on the streets. We therefore believe that the current service programs need to grow so the problem can be fixed.

MCBD has served four communities for almost 30 years. There have been accomplishments along the way, but this is a turning point for the organization and a time to reevaluate what is working and what is not. We in Mount Vernon believe that we can improve the quality of life in our four beloved communities. We hope that you will support us in our desire to have a stronger, better performing MCBD. A MCBD that is focused on its core mission, that is responsive to its residents and makes it a goal to maintain our neighborhoods to the highest standard possible in these challenging times.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (917) 806-8953.

Respectfully,


Jack Danna
MVBA President



Outlook

Re: Midtown Renewal and Performance

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>**Date** Tue 2/11/2025 8:35 PM**To** Christopher Regan <christophertregan@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>
Cc Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Nicol Regan <nicolregan@gmail.com>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810**E:** James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Christopher Regan <christophertregan@gmail.com>**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 8:33 PM**To:** Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>**Cc:** Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Nicol Regan <nicolregan@gmail.com>**Subject:** Midtown Renewal and Performance**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of Baltimore City IT Network Systems.**Reminder:** [DO NOT](#) click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe. Report any suspicious activities using the Report Phishing Email Button, or by emailing to Phishing@baltimorecity.gov

Dear Council President Cohen and Councilman Blanchard,

Please see the attached letter regarding Midtown Community Benefits District and their pending renewal.

Thank you,

Chris Regan
resident 824 Park Avenue



Re: Midtown Community Benefits District

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 8:24 PM

To Cordelia Grimm <drmcgrimm87@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>

Thank you for your message. I confirm receipt, and Council Services staff will add your email to the bill file to ensure your comments are included in the public record.

James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7
100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Cordelia Grimm <drmcgrimm87@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 7:56 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>

Subject: Midtown Community Benefits District

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern about the Midtown Community Benefits District. I believe that the core mission of Midtown is to keep the area "clean, green, and safe," and those of us who live here pay an additional tax specifically to fund this mission.

The Midtown Community Plan from around 2000 documented that the appearance of our community - often dirty and trash laden - was holding us back. The Plan stated that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve the community. Our neighborhood generates trash, because we are relatively densely settled, and because we have visitors to neighborhood restaurants and other businesses. Most neighbors do a good job keeping trash in

bins that are put out on the correct day of the week. Many visitors do a decent job of disposing of garbage correctly – although a few more public trash cans would be welcome. However, there are exceptions.

There are several problem properties well known to the neighborhood. I imagine these properties are well known to the City as well. These “problems” have been flouting the City’s trash requirements for decades - many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little to correct these repeat offenders, leaving the work to the residents of the community. This is galling, as we are paying Midtown to address the situations that make the neighborhood unsightly and dangerously rat-infested.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. I ask that you consider the central concern of garbage as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,

Cordelia Grimm

827 Park Avenue



Re: Re-authorization of Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD)

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:19 PM

To James Prost <jprostmd@gmail.com>; Scott, Brandon (Mayor) <Brandon.Scott@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Lee Tawney <lee.tawney@gmail.com>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: James Prost <jprostmd@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 5:23 PM

To: Scott, Brandon (Mayor) <Brandon.Scott@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Lee Tawney <lee.tawney@gmail.com>

Subject: Re-authorization of Midtown Community Benefits District (MCBD)

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Gentlemen:

As a resident of Baltimore City, a tax paying resident of the Midtown Community Benefits District, a resident of the seventh councilmanic district, a board member of the Bolton Hill Community Association and a member of the Midtown Community Benefit District Safety Committee I would like to express my strongest support for the re-authorization of the Midtown Community Benefit District.

Midtown has done much to assure that the area it serves is clean, green and safe. The re-authorization of this vital benefit district should be undertaken as swiftly as possible. I would be delighted to vouch for the services the organization provides and to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

James L Prost, AICP
205 West Lanvale Street
Baltimore, MD 21217
Sent from my iPhone



Re: Concerns regarding Midtown Benefits District!

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:18 PM

To David Wiesand <david@mclainwiesand.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: David Wiesand <david@mclainwiesand.com>

Sent: Saturday, February 8, 2025 2:27 PM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; photini.sinnis@gmail.com <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>

Subject: Concerns regarding Midtown Benefits District!

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose.

The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been

"problems" have for decades been skirting the City's trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community.

We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown's contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,

David Wiesand

David Wiesand
McLain Wiesand
1013 Cathedral St.
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-539-4440



mclainwiesand.com | www.instagram.com/mclainwiesand

www.housedemiurge.com |
www.instagram.com/housedemiurge



Re: Midtown contract renewal

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:18 PM

To Scott G. <nonling@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: Scott G. <nonling@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 10:32 AM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>

Subject: Midtown contract renewal

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose.

The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community

Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been “problems” have for decades been skirting the City’s trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community. We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,
Scott Goergens



Re: Midtown contract renewal

From Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Date Tue 2/11/2025 3:17 PM

To MOZRAHONE <masree1@gmail.com>; Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>; Mead, Nancy (City Council) <Nancy.Mead@baltimorecity.gov>; Leva, Anthony F (City Council) <anthony.leva@baltimorecity.gov>; District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>

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James Torrence, J.D.

Baltimore City Council, District 7

100 N. Holliday Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

O: 410-396-4810

E: James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov

From: MOZRAHONE <masree1@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 10:37 AM

To: Cohen, Zeke (City Council) <Zeke.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: Leach, Faith (Mayor's Office) <Faith.Leach@baltimorecity.gov>; Master, Maggie (City Council) <Maggie.Master@baltimorecity.gov>; Blanchard, Zachary (City Council) <zachary.blanchard@baltimorecity.gov>; Jones, Jermaine (City Council) <jermaine.jones@baltimorecity.gov>; Torrence, James (City Council) <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>; Photini Sinnis <photini.sinnis@gmail.com>

Subject: Midtown contract renewal

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Dear Council President Cohen:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the direction of the Midtown Community Benefits District over the past few years. During this time there has been a significant reduction in Midtown's services, specifically those centered around its core mission of keeping the community "clean, green, and safe". This has been particularly disappointing because our additional tax dollars are for this purpose. The central goals of "clean, green, and safe" were amplified in the Midtown Community Plan from around 2000—a straightforward document that put forward how the appearance of our

community (often looking dirty, run down, and trash laden), was holding us back from our potential—and that activities that cleaned and greened the public realm would improve this community. With so many people, visitors, and traffic, a great deal of trash is generated here. Properties that have been “problems” have for decades been skirting the City’s trash requirements—many since Midtown was authorized in the late 1990s. Midtown has done little in the way of reigning these landlords in and all the work has been left to the residents of the community. We need Midtown to stay focused on their core mission of clean, green, and safe. If they can accomplish those goals, then discussions can be had regarding other initiatives—but until this benchmark is met—it should be their 100% priority. I ask that you consider these facts as you renew Midtown’s contract. Perhaps you can tell them in no uncertain terms that they need to focus on their core mission, or ask for new leadership, or enable us to put our Midtown tax in an escrow account until we see evidence of their refocus.

Respectfully,
Scott Howard