


FROM	NAME & TITLE	Rudolph S. Chow, P.E. Director	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 19-0359		

July 15, 2019

TO:

Housing and Community Development Committee

INTRODUCTION

I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 19-0359 introduced by Council Member Clarke, President Young and Council Members Bullock, Stokes, Sneed, Dorsey, Cohen, Pinkett, Henry, Scott, Reisinger, Middleton, and Burnett.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Bill is to require the approval of the Forestry Division of the Department of Recreation and Parks prior to any tree removal on certain properties within a Baltimore City Open-Space Zoning District; and provide for a special effective date.

BRIEF HISTORY

The proposed legislation would add a tree canopy preservation standard to § 7-204 of Subtitle 2 {Open-Space Zoning Districts} of the Baltimore City Zoning Code that would require approval from the Forestry Division of the Department of Recreation and Parks before any tree on private property located within an Open-Space Zoning District could be removed. This prohibition applies to the private property owner as well as an outside entity, including the City of Baltimore. The proposed standard would only allow Forestry Division to approve the removal of a healthy tree if it did not significantly affect the City's tree canopy.

FISCAL IMPACT

It is difficult to assess the fiscal impacts that could result from this legislation as the Bill does not include any process, standards, criteria, or timing for the required approval conducted by the Forestry Division. As such, it is not clear whether diseased trees, encroaching limbs, or impacts to public infrastructure would be considered, or if the legislation as written would add to the timing or costs of any work of the City. It this Department's understanding that a little over 160 privately-owned properties have been identified as being impacted by this proposed legislation.

Housing and Community Development Committee.

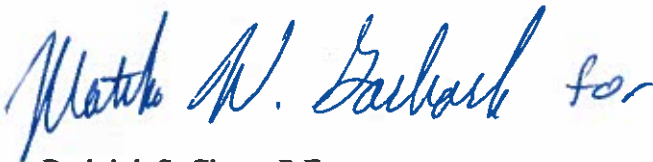
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AGENCY/DEPARTMENT POSITION

The Department of Public Works is concerned that, as currently written, the potential impacts of City Council Bill 19-0359 are difficult to assess by this Department, including potential impacts on the Forestry Division of the Department of Recreation and Parks and private property owners who fall within the definition of the Bill. We would urge that, before taking action on the legislation, the Committee consider reaching out to affected private property owners who may not be aware of the legislation.

Should the Committee have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Marcia Collins at 410-396-1960, or via email at Marcia.Collins@baltimorecity.gov .



Rudolph S. Chow, P.E.
Director

RSC:MMC