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**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE**

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the mission of the Health, Environment, and Technology (HET) Committee is to study, review, and recommend policies to improve overall public health and welfare, achieve environmental justice and sustainability, and promote the adoption of, and equitable access to, technology to better meet the needs of all City residents.

**The Honorable Danielle McCray
Chair**

PUBLIC HEARING

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2023
10:00 AM**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Council Resolution 23-0186R

**Informational Hearing - Examining the State of Baltimore's Middle
Neighborhoods**

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BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology

Council Resolution: 23-0186R

Informational Hearing - Examining the State of Baltimore's Middle Neighborhoods

Sponsor: Councilmember McCray

Introduced: August 21, 2023

Purpose:

For the purpose of inviting the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss: (1) the systemic disinvestment of Baltimore's middle neighborhoods and its connection to the decline in Baltimore's population of working and middle class families; (2) ongoing efforts to revitalize these neighborhoods; (3) future strategies to invest in these neighborhoods; and (4) present challenges to reversing current trends and restoring these once-stable communities.

Agency Reports

City Solicitor	Favorable
Department of Housing and Community Development	None as of writing
Department of Planning	None as of writing
Department of Transportation	None as of writing

Department of Public Works	None as of writing
Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success	None as of writing
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement	None as of writing
Baltimore City Administrator	None as of writing

Analysis

Background

This resolution aims to engage in a City Council discussion on critical issues affecting Baltimore. The focus areas include the systemic disinvestment in the city's middle neighborhoods, which is linked to the decline in the population of working and middle-class families. Additionally, the meeting aims to address ongoing revitalization efforts in these neighborhoods, outline future strategies for investment, and identify current challenges hindering the restoration of once-stable communities.

This initiative would be beneficial for Baltimore City as it provides a platform for comprehensive dialogue and collaboration among key decision-makers. By addressing the root causes of disinvestment and population decline, exploring effective revitalization strategies, and collectively tackling present challenges, the city can work towards a more sustainable and prosperous future. The engagement of diverse stakeholders underscores a concerted effort to promote positive change and address the complex issues impacting Baltimore's neighborhoods.

Additional Information

Fiscal Note:

Information Source(s): Reporting Agencies, Statement of Intent, Resolution 23-0186R.

Deontre Hayes

Analysis by: Deontre Hayes
 Analysis Date: December 18, 2023

Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396-1260

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

AGENCY REPORTS

SEE ATTACHED

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT,
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW
EBONY M. THOMPSON,
ACTING CITY SOLICITOR
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET
SUITE 101, CITY HALL
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

November 14, 2023

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: Council Bill 23-0186R – Informational Hearing – Examining the State of
Baltimore’s Middle Neighborhoods

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department reviewed City Council Bill 23-0186R. The bill invites the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the Director of the Department of public Works, the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss the state of Baltimore’s Middle Neighborhoods to include a discussion regarding the systemic disinvestment of Baltimore’s middle neighborhoods, ongoing efforts to revitalize these neighborhoods, future strategies to invest in their neighborhoods and present challenges.

In general, Art. III, §9 of the City Charter and City Code Art. 1, §1-4 give the City Council authority to study or investigate the operation of City agencies and to make recommendations for the more effective operation of the agencies. Article III, §9 of the Charter requires department heads, municipal officers not embraced in a department, and members of commissions and boards to appear before the City Council if so requested to participate in the discussion of matters relating to their respective departments, offices, commissions, or boards.

A resolution is an appropriate way for the City Council of Baltimore to express its views on a particular matter. *See, e.g., Inlet Assocs. v. Assateague House Condominium*, 313 Md. 413, 428 (1988). Therefore, the Law Department approves Council Bill 23-0186R for form and legal sufficiency.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teresa Epps Cummings".

Teresa Epps Cummings
Assistant Solicitor

cc: Ebony M. Thompson, Acting City Solicitor
Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Elena DiPietro, Chief Solicitor, General Counsel Division
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor
Ashlea Brown, Chief Solicitor
Jeffery Hochstetler, Chief Solicitor
Michelle Toth, Assistant Solicitor
Teresa Cummings, Assistant Solicitor

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 23-0186R
(First Reader)

Introduced by: Councilmember McCray, President Mosby, and Councilmembers Burnett, Bullock, Conway, Middleton, Schleifer, Stokes, Ramos, Porter, Glover, Cohen, Torrence, and Costello

Introduced and read first time: August 21, 2023

Assigned to: Health, Environment, and Technology Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Planning, Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Public Works, City Administrator, Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Examining the State of Baltimore’s Middle Neighborhoods**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community
4 Development, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of
5 Transportation, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the Director of the Mayor’s
6 Office of Children and Family Success, the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office of
7 Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator, and other interested parties to
8 appear before the City Council to discuss: (1) the systemic disinvestment of Baltimore’s
9 middle neighborhoods and its connection to the decline in Baltimore’s population of working
10 and middle class families; (2) ongoing efforts to revitalize these neighborhoods; (3) future
11 strategies to invest in these neighborhoods; and (4) present challenges to reversing current
12 trends and restoring these once-stable communities.

13 **Recitals**

14 The 2020 Decennial Census found that Baltimore’s population declined by 5.7% from 2010
15 to 2020, a loss of approximately 35,253 residents. In its 2020 data analysis report “Drilling
16 Down in Baltimore’s Neighborhoods, the Abell Foundation found that the majority of this
17 population loss was constituted of working and middle class families, who are leaving
18 Baltimore’s middle neighborhoods.

19 Middle neighborhoods are neighborhoods that are not unduly distressed, yet are not the most
20 affluent. Historically, middle neighborhoods have been a stabilizing force in Baltimore.
21 Communities like Frankford and those along the Belair Road corridor have been home to the
22 crux of the City’s tax base and legacy homeowners.

23 Between 2000 and 2017, predominately Black, middle income neighborhoods accounted for
24 70% of Baltimore’s Black population decline and over 50% of all population loss. Middle
25 neighborhood population decline can be attributed to numerous factors, including a lack of
26 capital investment, a lack of economic opportunities, inconsistent Code enforcement, the absence
27 of youth and family programming, and a scarcity of necessary community resources.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 23-0186R

1 Disinvestment in these communities has cause the local economy to degrade, caused
2 relentless out-migration, lowered the standard of living for current residents, and limited future
3 opportunities for Baltimore’s families to create inter-generational wealth.

4 As the long-standing residents of Baltimore’s middle neighborhoods continue to migrate into
5 surrounding counties, Baltimore loses the value of their presence. This City has always relied on
6 its working and middle classes to sustain its economy and municipal operations; however,
7 despite their substantial contributions to our City, these legacy homeowners struggle to maintain
8 and live in their homes due to a lack of investment in their communities.

9 In the last few years, some of our City agencies, alongside community-based organizations,
10 have begun to analyze the benefits of preserving the City’s middle neighborhoods and are
11 devising a strategy to revitalize them. It has never been more imperative that we generate
12 actionable plans and overturn current trends in order to preserve Baltimore’s neighborhoods,
13 provide for legacy residents, and protect the City’s overall economy.

14 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the City
15 Council invites the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development,
16 the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the
17 Director of the Department of Public Works, the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office of
18 Children and Family Success, the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and
19 Engagement, the City Administrator, and other interested parties to appear before the City
20 Council to discuss: (1) the systemic disinvestment of Baltimore’s middle neighborhoods and its
21 connection to the decline in Baltimore’s population of working and middle class families; (2)
22 ongoing efforts to revitalize these neighborhoods; (3) future strategies to invest in these
23 neighborhoods; and (4) present challenges to reversing current trends and restoring these once-
24 stable communities.

25 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Commissioner
26 of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the Department of
27 Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the Director of the Department of
28 Public Works, the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success, the
29 Director of the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator,
30 and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.