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Dear Council President Cohen and District Councilman Blanchard:

I have called Baltimore home for the last 26 years with all but 2 living in Mount Vernon. During this time I have completed more than 20 projects as a developer to attempt to revitalize Mount Vernon and Charles Street. All told my projects represent over \$20 million in investment that spurred other quality projects. I served on the boards of LiveBaltimore, Charles Street Development Corporation, and Historic Charles Street Association. Additionally, I've worked on committees for the Baltimore School for the Arts, Mount Vernon Belvedere Association, and the Baltimore Family Alliance.

I am also quite active in reporting via 311 as well as directly to Midtown and our last 2 City Councilman.

With all this being noted I can confidently say that I pay attention to the details and "vibe" of the neighborhood and with this attuned lens I can sadly attest that Mount Vernon has been stagnant when compared to so many other downtown neighborhoods. This isn't to say that the neighborhood has not made progress but the overall feel and desirability remains in neutral and in some cases has gone backwards (shuttered restaurants, closed grocery, failing MV Marketplace, giant surface parking lots, UB and MICA setbacks, loss of festivals like 1st Thursday, Book Fair, and Artscape disruption) while many of the most dedicated citizens got exhausted and moved on.

While each of these things has their own reasons they all contribute to the feeling of stagnation while at the same time the neighborhood feels dirtier and just less orderly. I believe part of this has to do with a lack of focus from Midtown, which I think has something to do with geographic focus and mission creep. I don't know the reason but we don't get the same outcome as we did in the past... like 15 years ago past.

One of the things that I've noticed is how infrequently we see Midtown Community Benefits District personnel in the community, which is in stark contrast to what we saw a decade ago or earlier. In the past, things like random bags of trash, dumping, and graffiti

didn't last long as Midtown was aware of it before most citizens and then had it addressed quickly. Today, bags will sit for months....I know because there are two bags of leaves that have sat next to the stoop of my house since before Christmas.

Many of us in the neighborhood believe it is time for Midtown to regain their focus on their core mission, which is clean and green. They need to once again be proactive in eliminating chronic issues and not just continuing to temporarily solve the same problem in the same spots over and over. This is a waste of our time as well as their time.

We pay the City AND we pay Midtown for these basic civic services and somehow we've still had to spend enormous amounts of time (some issues over a decade!) reporting, following up, requesting code enforcement, searching through trash, having meetings, reaching out to property owners.....only to have the same problems arise again.

It is time to hold Midtown accountable and press them to focus on their core mission of green and clean....ideally in a proactive manner with professional outcomes. 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.

Thank you for your time in reviewing our concerns.

Respectfully,

Chris and Nicol Regan

Residents at 824 Park Avenue

Outlier thoughts / questions:

- 1. Why does the Midtown District include State Center and if Midtown services this district does the State contribute financially to the district?*
- 2. If each resident is given 1 green City trash can then why do we see so many multifamily properties and businesses with multiple green cans? It seems like this would be a fairly straightforward violation to receive a citation and press these groups to get commercial private trash removal per the code.*

- 3. When is the City going to proactively pursue graffiti violators rather than simply painting the same spots over and over?*