



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner

Date: November 1, 2022

Re: City Council Bill 22-0281 Urban Renewal - Middle East - Amendment ____

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 22-0281 for the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan for Middle East to extend the life of the Plan, and to remove certain properties from the list in Appendices A, C, and D; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; and providing for a special effective date.

Pursuant to Maryland Code, Real Property, § 12-015.1, which was enacted in 2007, authority to acquire property by eminent domain must be renewed after 4 years if it has not been exercised. The City's Urban Renewal Plans (URPs) are the primary source of acquisition authority for various properties in areas where the City is addressing vacant lots and buildings, and encouraging or catalyzing community-based redevelopment efforts. DHCD is the steward for many URPs that would be affected by an expiration of acquisition authority, and is therefore seeking to renew such authority where it is still needed. Additionally, some URPs expire in their entirety at the end of 2022, which could eliminate the authority to sell the properties that have already been acquired pursuant to the URPs. Therefore, DHCD is also seeking to extend some URP plans altogether.

If enacted, Council Bill 22-0281 would extend the life of the URP and also remove from the URP those properties already sold for redevelopment in furtherance of the URP's objectives. DHCD has determined that the City no longer needs the authority to acquire the properties listed in the URP, but still does require the authority to dispose of the properties within the URP boundaries in the City's inventory. Therefore, the bill would seek to extend the URP through December 31, 2026.

At its regular meeting of October 13, 2022, the Planning Commission reviewed the bill, voted in favor of adopting the recommendations of its planning staff and recommended that Bill 22-0281 be approved by the City Council.

DHCD **supports** the passage of City Council Bill 22-0281.



AK/sm

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*