



CITY OF BALTIMORE  
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

<b>TO</b>	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
<b>FROM</b>	The Mayor's Commission on Disabilities
<b>DATE</b>	October 29, 2024
<b>SUBJECT</b>	MCD Report on Baltimore City Council Bill 24-0583 The 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Baltimore

**MCD POSITION: Favorable, provided the implementation have an accessibility focus.**

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### SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION

The Mayor's Commission on Disabilities (MCD) has reviewed and is herein reporting on City Council Bill 24-0583 – *The 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Baltimore*. This is an administration-led planning resolution developed by the Department of Planning in partnership with other agencies in the City of Baltimore.

The resolution seeks to accomplish the following:

- Review, revise, and adopt the 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan of the City of Baltimore.
- Adhere the City of Baltimore to Maryland State Land Use Article, § 1-405, in which the City must enact, adopt, amend, and execute a comprehensive plan that contains the policies, statements, goals, and interrelated plans for private and public land use, transportation, and community facilities for the City's future development.
- Provide a deadline by which the Comprehensive Master Plan of the City must be adopted (December 31, 2024)
- Detail the organization of the Plan.
- Explain the land use map of the Plan.
- Highlight the goals of the policy recommendations made in the Plan.
- Require the land use map be reviewed and updated by the Department of Planning on a quadrennial basis.
- Require a copy of the enacted Comprehensive Master Plan be sent to the Mayor, Maryland State Department of Planning, Mayor's Office of Employment Development, Department of Finance, Health Department, Baltimore City Heritage Area, Baltimore Dept. of Housing & Community Development, Housing Authority of Baltimore City, Law Department, Department of Legislative

Reference, Mayor's Office of Minority Business Development, Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods, Department of Planning, Police Department, Department of Public Works, Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Commission on Aging, Retirement and Education, the Mayor's Commission on Disabilities, the Enoch Pratt Free Library System, the Baltimore City Public School System, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety, Baltimore City Information Technology, and the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals

- Provide an effective date of the day it is enacted for the resolution and the Plan.

## ANALYSIS

The Mayor's Commission on Disabilities (MCD) appreciates the Plan's rightful focus on equitable development informed by Baltimore City's history of race-based neighborhood disinvestment. Considering the Plan's stated equity framework, the MCD suggests the Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) and the equity-focused boards and commissions it supports, including the MCD, be included in the ongoing evolution and implementation of this living document.

Inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of City life must be an underlying tenant of development, not an afterthought. The Plan notes (p. 169) that over 17% of City residents are living with a disability. To best serve this population, the baseline for all City planning must be conscious accessibility. The legacy of inaccessibility must be explicitly acknowledged.

The notion of civil rights for people with disabilities was first broadly acknowledged by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) less than 35 years ago; this was long after the Civil Rights Act that protected other historically and continually marginalized people. For the Plan to have a complete vision for the City, it must acknowledge the legacy of exclusion of people with disabilities in the same way that it places significance on the historical disinvestment in formerly redlined neighborhoods.

Residents with disabilities have largely the same needs as the rest of the population, they simply have more barriers preventing their access. The MCD appreciates the Plan's specific references to accessibility, inclusivity, and universal design as they relate to many key planning topics, but notes that the disability equity framework must also be an underlying tenant of the Plan.

The MCD looks forward to the City's commitment to planning with disability in mind and seeing landmark accessibility milestones featured on the next Plan's "Baltimore Timeline."

## CONCLUSION

The Mayor's Commission on Disabilities has reviewed City Council Bill 24-0583 and respectfully requests a **favorable** committee report City Council Bill 24-0583, provided implementation of the Plan have an accessibility focus.