

Leva, Anthony F (City Council)

From: giselle@gisellebella.com
Sent: Saturday, March 8, 2025 11:41 AM
To: Testimony
Cc: Jones, Jermaine (City Council); Cortese, Christina (City Council); Holcomb, Eric (DOP); diane1802williams@gmail.com; celena.owens@baltimore-oliver.org
Subject: Letter of Support for City Council Bill 25-0003 - Establishing Conservation Districts in Baltimore City

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Dear Baltimore City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for City Council Bill 25-0003, which will enable the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) to establish a **Conservation District program** in Baltimore City. As a dedicated advocate for **Historic Oliver**, I believe this initiative is critical to preserving and revitalizing communities like ours while promoting responsible and sustainable development.

Historic Oliver, a community rich in African American cultural heritage and historical significance, has long faced challenges related to preservation, economic development, and housing stability. The introduction of Conservation Districts provides a practical and effective solution to ensure that our neighbourhood retains its historic character while allowing for contemplative growth and rehabilitation.

The passage of this bill will directly benefit Historic Oliver by:

1. **Providing a Layer of Protection for Historic Properties:**
 - Unlike full historic district designation, which may be restrictive for some communities, the Conservation District framework allows for a customized level of design review, ensuring that historic buildings and structures are preserved while still allowing flexibility for responsible development. Historic Oliver is a community which will immensely be impacted by this as there are several historical buildings with the community.
2. **Making Historic Preservation Tax Credits More Accessible:**
 - Many of Historic Oliver's buildings require significant rehabilitation and investment. By making local historic preservation tax credits available to properties in Conservation Districts, this bill will provide essential financial support for homeowners and small businesses seeking to restore and maintain historic structures which directly impact our historical story.
3. **Encouraging Responsible Development & Community Engagement:**
 - With ongoing redevelopment efforts in Oliver, a Conservation District designation will ensure that the community has a voice in shaping the future of its built environment. This will help prevent incompatible alterations while allowing residents, stakeholders, and CHAP to collaboratively determine preservation guidelines that meet the community's needs.
4. **Revitalizing Historic Oliver While Maintaining Affordability:**
 - Conservation Districts can help prevent displacement by encouraging targeted revitalization efforts rather than widespread demolition and redevelopment. This approach will allow current residents to benefit from investment while ensuring the neighbourhood retains its cultural identity and historic integrity.

By passing City Council Bill 25-0003, Baltimore City will take a meaningful step toward empowering communities like Historic Oliver with the tools necessary to protect its historic character, encourage responsible investment, and sustain long-term revitalization efforts.

I strongly urge the Baltimore City Council to approve this bill and recognise the positive impact that Conservation Districts will have on neighbourhoods throughout the city

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Schedule your meeting with me

Saving our [Kalinago culture and people of Dominica](#) involves preserving our indigenous heritage, promoting cultural awareness, and supporting initiatives for our economic and social well-being. This includes efforts to protect our ancestral lands, maintain traditional practices, and provide educational opportunities that respect our unique identity and contributions to Dominica's Kalinago customs.

[Learn more about our cultural heritage](#) and [how you can support](#).

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