

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0257R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Stokes, President Young, Councilmembers Henry, Middleton,
Costello, Branch, Kraft, Holton, Welch, Clarke, Curran, Reisinger
Introduced and adopted: August 17, 2015

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Establishing an Open Space and Parks Task Force

FOR the purpose of calling for the establishment of an Open Space and Parks Task Force to produce an Open Space and Parks Plan to guide Baltimore City's development and maintenance of these key resources for the 21st Century.

Recitals

Open space and parks are one of Baltimore's great assets. A robust and integrated Open Space and Parks Plan utilizing these strengths is a key to economic development and neighborhood revitalization. Proper treatment of these critical spaces can also increase the engagement of citizens and neighborhoods in the life of the City, improve public health, and encourage individuals and families who are not yet part of the Baltimore City community to become so. As critical as recreation centers are to Baltimore, open space and parks can be instrumental in making these recreation centers even more successful.

In order to preserve and strengthen Baltimore's network of parks and open space, its essential that a comprehensive Open Space and Parks Plan be developed with input from all relevant stakeholders. The best way to create this plan is by first creating an Open Space and Parks Task Force to study the issue and produce an appropriate plan.

This Task Force will be charged with presenting to the City Council, the Mayor, and the Citizens of Baltimore an Open Space and Parks Plan explaining how the proper use of these strengths will improve Baltimore. The Task Force must first inventory these assets, review what planning efforts have already been undertaken and how other cities have crafted such plans, then move the process forward to completion. The Task Force must be expansive in its vision but also narrowly focused where appropriate, including suggestions for future funding. The proposed completion date is September, 2016.

The parties with the most passionate interests and commitment to a given open space or park are those who live nearby, or who regularly utilize it, they must be included in the process. With that in mind, the Task Force will be a tri-partnership between (1) City Government, (2) the Task Force itself which will be composed of a broad selection of interested parties including neighborhood associations and park/open space advocates, and (3) the citizens of the City.

Key responsibilities of the Open Space and Parks Task Force will include:

1. Developing and approving the quality requirements for any RFPs to be issued as a part of the planning process.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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- 1 2. Ensuring that there are quality, accessible source documents and relevant data to
2 authoritatively support the open space/parks planning process and its conclusions.
- 3 3. Assisting the City with securing funding with the understanding that any private
4 funds which are raised will be placed with the Parks and People Foundation. The
5 Foundation will also be administratively responsible for the process.
- 6 4. Engaging the public in understanding the need for an Open Space and Parks Plan and
7 establishing and facilitating ways for the citizens to create an ideal version of this
8 plan.
- 9 5. Addressing and examining ancillary issues and matters that closely tie to the Open
10 Space and Parks Plan including the advisability of creating of a land trust,
11 establishing regulatory and governance regimes, and offering various alternatives for
12 financing the City’s open spaces and parks.

13 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
14 Council calls for the establishment of an Open Space and Parks Task Force to produce an Open
15 Space and Parks Plan to guide Baltimore City’s development and maintenance of these key
16 resources for the 21st Century.

17 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
18 Director of Recreation & Parks, the Director of Planning, the Director of Finance, the President
19 & CEO of the Parks & People Foundation, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City
20 Council.