



Legislation Text

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The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember McCray

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **Informational Hearing - Examining the State of Baltimore's Middle Neighborhoods**

For the purpose of inviting the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss: (1) the systemic disinvestment of Baltimore's middle neighborhoods and its connection to the decline in Baltimore's population of working and middle class families; (2) ongoing efforts to revitalize these neighborhoods; (3) future strategies to invest in these neighborhoods; and (4) present challenges to reversing current trends and restoring these once-stable communities.

Recitals

The 2020 Decennial Census found that Baltimore's population declined by 5.7% from 2010 to 2020, a loss of approximately 35,253 residents. In its 2020 data analysis report "Drilling Down in Baltimore's Neighborhoods, the Abell Foundation found that the majority of this population loss was constituted of working and middle class families, who are leaving Baltimore's middle neighborhoods.

Middle neighborhoods are neighborhoods that are not unduly distressed, yet are not the most affluent. Historically, middle neighborhoods have been a stabilizing force in Baltimore. Communities like Frankford and those along the Belair Road corridor have been home to the crux of the City's tax base and legacy homeowners.

Between 2000 and 2017, predominately Black, middle income neighborhoods accounted for 70% of Baltimore's Black population decline and over 50% of all population loss. Middle neighborhood population decline can be attributed to numerous factors, including a lack of capital investment, a lack of economic opportunities, inconsistent Code enforcement, the absence of youth and family programming, and a scarcity of necessary community resources.

Disinvestment in these communities has cause the local economy to degrade, caused relentless out-migration, lowered the standard of living for current residents, and limited future opportunities for Baltimore's families to create inter-generational wealth.

As the long-standing residents of Baltimore's middle neighborhoods continue to migrate into surrounding counties, Baltimore loses the value of their presence. This City has always relied on its working and middle classes to sustain its economy and municipal operations; however, despite their substantial contributions to our City, these legacy homeowners struggle to maintain and live in their homes due to a lack of investment in their communities.

In the last few years, some of our City agencies, alongside community-based organizations, have begun to analyze the benefits of preserving the City's middle neighborhoods and are devising a strategy to revitalize them. It has never been more imperative that we generate actionable plans and overturn current trends in order to preserve Baltimore's neighborhoods, provide for legacy residents, and protect the City's overall economy.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the City Council invites the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss: (1) the systemic disinvestment of Baltimore's middle neighborhoods and its connection to the decline in Baltimore's population of working and middle class families; (2) ongoing efforts to revitalize these neighborhoods; (3) future strategies to invest in these neighborhoods; and (4) present challenges to reversing current trends and restoring these once-stable communities.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Department of Transportation, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the City Administrator, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.