



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB1193

February 28, 2025

TO: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill - 1193 Housing Development Permits - Local Reporting Requirements (Maryland Housing Data Transparency Act)

POSITION: Oppose

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **opposes** House Bill (HB) 1193.

HB 1193 requires local jurisdictions that issue at least 50 building or development permits for new residential units each year to make monthly reports to the Department of Planning regarding housing development permits issued by the local jurisdiction.

The Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) regularly processes over 40,000 permits a year. We work diligently across agencies to get through reviews in a timely manner. The length between application and final approval depends greatly on the nature of the permit and the scope of work. There are several steps in the permitting process including application review, processing, approval, payment and inspections. For many applicants, depending on the nature of the permit, the processing duration can be same day or between 24 and 48 Hours.

HB 1193 will stretch our staff resources as the monthly reporting requirements outlined in the Bill are too onerous, particularly when it comes to time spent on processing. If the purpose of this Bill is to gather information on new housing developments a simpler solution would be for local jurisdictions to report to the Department of Planning on the issuance of new residential occupancy permits and not every permit and permit-extension on a project. This would more accurately represent new housing developments. Our permits are already searchable online on Open Baltimore but staff will still be needed to compile the information required in the Bill and transmit it to the State.

Practically speaking, it is unclear what purpose the monthly reports would serve. Local jurisdictions all have unique and distinct processes and software for reviewing permit applications and tools for encouraging residential development. HB 1193 would impact DHCD by pulling staff time and resources away from providing critical services to compile monthly reports for information that is already searchable online.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request an **unfavorable** report on HB 1193.