



January 28, 2025

Chair Vanessa Atterbury
Ways and Means Committee
Maryland General Assembly

Re: Support for House Bill 258 – West North Avenue Development Authority

Dear Chair Atterbury and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

On behalf of MCB Real Estate, I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 258, which strengthens the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA) and its mission to revitalize West Baltimore.

MCB Real Estate is a Baltimore-based, community-focused investment management firm with a nationwide portfolio of approximately 15 million square feet and an additional four million square feet under development. Locally, we are proud to lead the development of Reservoir Square, an 8.1-acre mixed-use project on West North Avenue that includes new townhomes, retail space, and a state-of-the-art American Job Center to support workforce development.

Our adjacent project at 600 W. North Avenue demonstrates the transformative impact of WNADA's support. Last year, we were awarded a \$1 million WNADA grant for the acquisition and demolition of the long-blighted property, clearing the way for its redevelopment as a grocery-anchored retail center. This project will bring the first new grocery store to this part of West Baltimore in decades, meeting a critical community need for access to fresh food while creating jobs and spurring economic growth.

Development in West Baltimore faces numerous challenges, including high costs for construction, financing, and other expenses. WNADA plays an indispensable role in overcoming these barriers by providing resources, advocacy, and coordination to make meaningful progress possible.

We urge the committee to pass HB 258 and ensure that WNADA has the resources and authority it needs to continue fostering economic development and community revitalization along the West North Avenue Corridor. This bill is essential to sustaining the positive momentum that WNADA has helped create.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leland S. Shelton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leland S. Shelton
Director of Government Relations