COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 2025, Legislative Day No. 3

Bill No. 19-25

Councilmembers Marks, Kach, Ertel, Patoka, & Crandell

By the County Council, March 3, 2025

A BILL
ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

County Charter – Baltimore County Farmland Preservation Act

FOR the purpose of amending the County Charter to state that any changes, revisions, or amendments to the boundaries of the Urban-Rural Demarcation Line (URDL) shall require approval by a certain threshold of affirmative votes of the County Council; amending the County Charter to clarify that, except for consideration of the boundaries of the URDL, other matters such as a plan, zoning map, rule, or regulation that was recommended for adoption, amendment, or repeal by the department of planning, the planning board, or the zoning commissioner shall be approved by a simple majority of a legislative act of the County Council; amending the definition of the URDL in the Zoning Regulations, contingent upon the passage and ratification of the Charter amendments by the voters of

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter stricken from existing law.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from bill.
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

Baltimore County; and generally relating to the Baltimore County Charter.

BY adding

Section 1014
Article X – Miscellaneous
Baltimore County Charter

BY repealing and re-enacting, with amendments

Section 522.1
Article V – The Administrative Services
Division 3 – Departments in the Administrative Services
Subdivision 1 – Department of Planning
Baltimore County Charter

BY adding

Section 101.1, the definition of "Urban-Rural Demarcation Line" listed alphabetically
Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, as amended

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND, that under the authority granted to it by Section 1202 of the Baltimore County Charter, Section 1014 of Article X – Miscellaneous of the Baltimore County Charter, is proposed to be added and Section 522.1 of Article V – The Administrative Services of the Baltimore County Charter, is proposed to be repealed and re-enacted, with amendments, and to read as follows:

Article V – The Administrative Services

Division 3 – Departments in the Administrative Services

Subdivision 1 – Department of Planning

Section 522.1. Duties of the department of planning; limitation of powers.

(a) The department of planning shall have the responsibility and duty of planning for Baltimore County, including:

(1) Preparing, at least every ten years, and revising, a master plan; monitoring the implementation of the master plan; and preparing at least every two years a report to the county executive and county council on the progress achieved toward implementation of the master plan.

(2) Preparing, at least every six years, recommending to the county council, and administering, a zoning map.

(3) Preparing and recommending to the county council rules and regulations governing the subdivision of land, and administering the subdivision rules and regulations as adopted.

(4) Preparing and recommending to the county council zoning rules and regulations which, together with the zoning map, shall constitute a zoning code.

(5) Administering the zoning code.

(b) (1) The master plan shall be adopted as provided by section 523 of this Charter.

(2) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BY SECTION 1014 OF THIS CHARTER, ~~All~~ ALL other plans, zoning maps, and rules and regulations recommended for adoption, amendment, or repeal by the department of planning, the planning board or the zoning commissioner shall, prior to taking effect as law, be approved by legislative act of the county council.

Article X – Miscellaneous

SECTION 1014. URBAN-RURAL DEMARCATION LINE.

ANY CHANGES, REVISIONS, OR AMENDMENTS TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE URBAN-RURAL DEMARCATION LINE (URDL) SHALL REQUIRE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PLANNING BOARD AND APPROVAL BY THE AFFIRMATIVE VOTE OF A MAJORITY PLUS ONE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS ESTABLISHED BY THIS CHARTER~~, INCLUDING THE AFFIRMATIVE VOTE OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBER OR MEMBERS IN WHOSE DISTRICT THE CHANGE, REVISION, OR AMENDMENT IS LOCATED~~.

SECTION 2. BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations read as follows:

Article 1 – General Provisions

Section 101 – Definitions

§ 101.1. Word usage; definitions.

Words used in the present tense include the future; words in the singular number include the plural number; the word "shall" is mandatory. For the purposes of these regulations, certain terms and words are defined below.

Any word or term not defined in this section shall have the ordinarily accepted definition as set forth in the most recent edition of Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged.

URBAN-RUAL DEMARCATION LINE – A boundary line established by the Planning Board, dividing that portion of Baltimore County considered as "urban" from that portion of the county considered as "rural." In ~~establishing or relocating such line,~~ RECOMMENDING ANY CHANGES, REVISIONS, OR AMENDMENTS TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE URBAN-RURAL DEMARCATION LINE UNDER SECTION 1014 OF THE CHARTER, the Planning Board shall consider population density, existing public water supply and sewerage facilities, other existing public facilities and public facilities scheduled for planning or construction in the capital budget and five-year capital program.

SECTION ~~2.~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that pursuant to Section 1202 of the Baltimore County Charter, the question of whether or not the Charter is to be amended as proposed by this Act shall be submitted to the voters of Baltimore County at the general election on November 3, 2026, and that this Act shall be published in at least two newspapers of general circulation in the County for five successive weeks prior to the election.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that Section 2 of this Act is contingent on the passage of Section 1 of this Act, consisting of Charter amendments, and the ratification by the voters of Baltimore County; and if such passage and ratification does not occur, Section 2 of this Act shall be null and void with no further action required by the County Council.

SECTION ~~3.~~ 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that upon ratification by the voters of Baltimore County, this Act shall become effective from and after the thirtieth day following the 2026 general election.

LEGISLATION DETAIL

LEGISLATION	BILL 19-25
DISPOSITION	PASSED AS AMENDED
ENACTED	N/A
EFFECTIVE	N/A
AMENDMENTS	YES (2)

ROLL CALL - BILL

MOTION MARKS SECOND ERTEL

AYE	NAY	
☐	☑	Councilman Young
☑	☐	Councilman Patoka
☑	☐	Councilman Kach
☐	☑	Councilman Jones
☑	☐	Councilman Marks
☑	☐	Councilman Ertel
☑	☐	Councilman Crandell

ROLL CALL - AMENDMENTS

MOTION MARKS SECOND ERTEL

AYE	NAY	
☑	☐	Councilman Young
☑	☐	Councilman Patoka
☑	☐	Councilman Kach
☑	☐	Councilman Jones
☑	☐	Councilman Marks
☑	☐	Councilman Ertel
☑	☐	Councilman Crandell

ROLL CALL - AMENDMENTS

MOTION PATOKA SECOND ERTEL

AYE	NAY	
☑	☐	Councilman Young
☑	☐	Councilman Patoka
☐	☑	Councilman Kach
☑	☐	Councilman Jones
☐	☑	Councilman Marks
☑	☐	Councilman Ertel
☐	☑	Councilman Crandell

ROLL CALL - AMENDMENTS

MOTION SECOND

AYE	NAY	
☐	☐	Councilman Young
☐	☐	Councilman Patoka
☐	☐	Councilman Kach
☐	☐	Councilman Jones
☐	☐	Councilman Marks
☐	☐	Councilman Ertel
☐	☐	Councilman Crandell