



City of Pittsburgh

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Text File

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Committee: Committee on Finance and Law

Status: Passed Finally

Presented by Mr. Peduto

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to form a Land Recycling Task Force which shall assist in the development of a plan for how the City can better recycle tax delinquent and abandoned properties and turn them back into revenue-generating land that provides for future use and the increased viability of our neighborhoods

WHEREAS, the privilege of property ownership has a corresponding responsibility of timely payment of taxes; and

WHEREAS, there are many properties in the City of Pittsburgh that are several years past due in taxes that are causing blight and destroying the quality of life for those who currently reside in our City's neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City has supported the outsourcing of delinquent City real estate taxes to a 3rd party agency, Jordan Tax Service, that will consolidate and centralize the collection process with Pittsburgh Public Schools, the County of Allegheny and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority as part of a greater movement towards linking tax collections; and

WHEREAS, one of the core responsibilities for the government of the City of Pittsburgh is to support the recycling of tax delinquent and abandoned property in the City of Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, the City of Pittsburgh was recently selected to participate in the Community Land Reform Initiative, a joint program of the Center for Land Reform and Harvard University's Kennedy School for Government, and sponsored by the Ford Foundation, to explore successful approaches to implementing large scale land recycling systems that are financially sustainable and are not dependent on public or private grant funds; and

WHEREAS, this taskforce would evaluate the creation of a land bank or other entity that would be responsible for acquiring, maintaining and facilitating in the transaction of tax delinquent and abandoned property for the purpose of transforming neighborhood liabilities into community assets; and,

WHEREAS, the formalized creation of a land bank entity could potentially facilitate the recycling of tax delinquent and abandoned residential, commercial and industrial properties through collaboration and strategic planning with community groups, businesses, non-profits, planners or other community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the recycling of tax delinquent and abandoned residential, commercial and industrial properties not only enhances the quality of life for those currently living in our City's neighborhoods but it also

dramatically increases tax revenues and fees for local governments and authorities,

Be it resolved by the Council of the City of Pittsburgh as follows:

Section 1. The Mayor is hereby authorized to form a special task force - the Land Recycling Task Force. The Mayor is further authorized to select up to twenty-five representatives from entities including, but not limited to, city and county departments, community groups, community-based nonprofits, public authorities, and local and state legislators that have an interest and current or potential future role in the land recycling system, to serve on the task force to develop a plan to address comprehensive land recycling strategies for the City of Pittsburgh. The task force shall work towards the following goals:

1. Define goals for land recycling, tax collection, and homeowner preservation systems
2. Assess the current system of land recycling
3. Evaluate national best practices and applicability of other systems to Pittsburgh
4. Draft a financial model for a Pittsburgh system that integrates national best practices
 - Determine the feasibility of this model
 - Assess advantages and disadvantages
5. Assemble a team of experts and political leaders to explore the structure and implementation of land recycling systems
6. Evaluate land banking and other potential mechanisms to achieve comprehensive land recycling goals
7. Develop an implementation plan and timeline
8. Present a recommendation to the Mayor for implementation

Section 2. The Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group has agreed to serve as the partner organization to facilitate fundraising for ancillary services necessary for the success of the Land Recycling Task Force. These services may include, but are not limited to, staffing to manage the task force, the hiring of expert consultants, and relevant analyses.

Section 3. The Land Recycling Task Force will have twenty four (24) months from its creation to meet, gather the requisite information, craft its plan and deliver it to the Mayor.